

FRANCIS BACON

WROTE SHAKESPEARE

*THE ARGUMENTS PRO AND CON
FRANKLY DEALT WITH.*

By H. CROUCH BATCHELOR.



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LONDON:
ROBERT BANKS & SON,
RACQUET COURT, FLEET STREET, E.C.

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1912.



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FRANCIS BACON.

Y gwir yn erbyn y byd.

ILLUSTRIOUS son of an illustrious sire !

Immortal mortal—deathless still, though dead—
Whose " heavenly alchemy," with golden fire,

Could gild the " pale stream " in its sandy bed—
Had I the power to paint thee as I ought,

Philosopher and poet, doubly great !

With courtliest grace thy wit and wisest thought
Should reign for ever throned in sovran state.

What though awhile the darkening cloud may hide

Thy splendour from our eyes, yet soon shalt thou
Shine forth in all thy glory long denied ;

And Truth shall shed its halo round thy brow :
For though the darkness linger through the night,
The morning comes, and morn shall bring the light.

SAMUEL WADDINGTON.

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BACON v, SHAKESPEARE.

Advice to English Schoolboys.

SHAKSPER.

To gain command of English words and every grammar rule,
'Tis best to be a butcher's son and never go to school.
To form good plays in perfect style, and full of classic knowledge,
'Tis best to be a poacher bold, and never go to college.
To write of ladies, lords and dukes, of kings and kingly sport,
'Tis best to be a common man and never go to court.
To write about philosophy and law and medicine,
'Tis best to stand at horses' heads, and never read a line.
To treat of foreign lands in strains that all men must applaud,
'Tis best to stay in England and never go abroad.
To scale the heights of human bliss and sound the depths of woe,
'Tis best to make a steady "pile" and never let it go.
If come to ripe maturity when genius has full play,
'Tis best to lead an easy life and lay the pen away.
To show that "knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to Heaven,"
'Tis best that to your own dear child no lessons should be given.
To surely earn immortal fame as England's greatest bard,
'Tis best to leave no manuscripts and die of "drinking hard."

BACON.

To win injustice and contempt from every biassed mind,
'Tis best to be "the wisest and the brightest of mankind."

L'Envoi Serieux.

SHAKE-SPEARE.

To warn the strong, to teach the proud, to give new knowledge scope,
'Twas best to use a *nom-de-pume*, and write in faith and hope
That future ages, wiser grown, would learn the royal rule,
That knowledge does not come to those who never go to school.

E. C. S.

FRANCIS BACON WROTE SHAKESPEARE

INTRODUCTORY.

IN April, 1910, I delivered a lecture for the Ladies' Guild of Francis St. Alban, which was subsequently issued in pamphlet form, for the purpose of supporting the proposition that Francis Bacon was the author of the whole of the literature, which for 300 years has passed current under the name of "Shakespeare."

The pamphlet has been extensively circulated, reviewed by some leading journals, and has evoked much private correspondence addressed to myself.

But as the duration of the lecture was limited to one hour, the points dealt with could only be treated sketchily, and a great number of equally salient points could not even be alluded to. I intend, in the following pages, to incorporate the text of that lecture, but to considerably amplify it, and I undertake that not one objection which has been raised within my knowledge shall be evaded or left unanswered.

As a preliminary observation, I would ask attention to the fact that, in discussing this question, the whole bias of vested interests is on the side of the vulgar or "orthodox" belief. Those who call in question the authorship of the actor who was born and died in Stratford have nothing to gain. The Stratfordians have everything to lose. This is so obvious that a large

proportion of the latter simply decline to take any notice of the question. They deny that there is a question, and no religious "heresy" has been met with more bitter hatred nor a more would-be persecuting spirit. It is natural enough. But there is this difference between Shakespeariolatry and all other "olatrics," or forms of idolatry, that the central object of worship is a tangible being, that he demonstrably lived and died, and that what we know about him we know more certainly—in the strict meaning of the word—than we can ever know the personality of the supreme beings of any purely religious faith.

The practical deduction to be made from this is that the benefit of the doubt may always be claimed by the Baconians. The terms "Stratfordians" and "Baconians" will conveniently indicate the respective protagonists and obviate much wasteful explanation throughout the investigation.

Of the vast mass of admirers of the "Shakespeare" literature there is a considerable section, daily growing larger, who either disbelieve or are prepared to consider with some inclination towards disbelief that the Stratford man was the author. But it is a far more difficult task to win people over to the full Baconian belief. The greatest destructive of the Stratford authorship is the learned, acute and humorous Mr. George Greenwood, M.P., whose large book, "The Shakespeare Problem Re-stated," should make it impossible for any impartial reader to believe that Shakspeare, of Stratford, did write or could have written one line of the literature. But Mr. Greenwood will not commit himself to even a theory as to the actual author. Still, as he leaves the matter, it is much simplified. There was obviously only one Englishman living at the time who could have been, and he was Francis Bacon. The inference from Mr. Greenwood's patient and exhaustive study is that he has

an excessive scrupulosity in making any statement which he cannot prove. It is easier in this case to disprove than to prove. The negative case can be put with such convincing force for ordinary reasonable and disinterested beings that it practically amounts to a positive demonstration. Thus it is easier to prove that if Shakspeare wrote the literature we have an instance of a stupendous miracle than it is to prove that, although Bacon possessed all the qualifications, he might still have refrained from writing it. In the one case we should have to exercise that form of faith described as "believing what you know to be untrue," on the other there is no tax whatever upon one's faculty of credence.

There is also another and very influential reason why the acceptance of Bacon is so difficult. When the subject is started in private conversation, someone is sure to say, "Right or wrong, nothing will induce me to give up Shakespeare for such a despicable creature as Bacon." This is especially the way of the "pretty Fannies." These always speak sentimentally of Shakespeare as if he were a personal friend. It is certain that for young ladies the real man would have been an unfit acquaintance.

Now, no man in British history has been so much misunderstood and maligned as Bacon. Few more personally lovable beings have ever lived. For the present generation—which finds so little time for serious study and fritters itself away in ephemeral journalism—Macaulay's celebrated Essay sums up their whole "knowledge" about Bacon. Yet for the thousands who have read that Essay is there one per cent. who have read Spedding's reply to Macaulay, or Abbott's view of Bacon's treatment of Essex, or indeed anything derived from any other source?

Macaulay describes Bacon as having been gifted with "the most exquisitely constructed intellect ever

bestowed upon the children of men." But that Essay is, on the whole, injurious to Bacon's moral character, and seems almost to exalt his intellect at the expense of his honour. Late in life Macaulay himself told friends of mine that he regretted only one piece he had written—the Essay on Bacon. Well, he might do so, for with his popular style he captured the ears of the groundlings and he affixed a stigma to the name which for the majority of people has proved indelible. But it is only indelible so long as no attempt is made to erase it. Intelligence and truth are its instant solvents.

Cocksurenness is the principle feature of Macaulay's style. It is not the same thing as omniscience or infallibility, as the following example from Macaulay's equally celebrated Essay on Warren Hastings proves.

Sir William Hunter in his book, "The Thackerays in India," says: "No slander is more audacious than that falsehood to which Macaulay has put the seal of history. He informs us that Warren Hastings' father was 'an idle, worthless boy, married before he was sixteen, lost his wife in two years, and died in the West Indies.' The parish registers and Oxford lists prove that 'the idle, worthless boy' was an ordained clergyman, educated at Balliol College, and 24 or 26 years of age when he married his wife, who was herself 25."

"The legend lives, and will live, in the picturesque pages of Macaulay, whose dangerous gift it was to take captive his readers whether he were right or wrong."

I think Macaulay leaves the Court a discredited witness. There will be many more in the same predicament before the last of these pages is reached. I believe that Macaulay's works are officially marked at Oxford for the guidance of undergraduates, as not to be used as authority for historic fact.

THE CHARACTER OF SIR FRANCIS BACON.

HE was, veritably, one of the sweetest and gentlest of beings, almost feminine in his softness of disposition and tendency to shrink from the harsh conflicts of the world. He was always poor and always yearning for contemplation, always generous and indifferent about money, too great a poet and gentleman to be careful and acquisitive. His "fall" is to me only an additional piece of evidence of the moral beauty of his character, for instead of instantly repelling the accusation of corruption with energy and scorn he was apparently overwhelmed with grief when the discovery was brought home to him that the *system* by which his servants had accepted gifts from litigants had subsisted so long, and, as he had every reason to believe that such gifts had been received, he took upon himself amiably (but unwisely) the full responsibility. He was the first to repudiate an evil custom, and expressed himself as almost grateful that his case should have been the occasion for permanent reform.

To my mind, he needs no other defence than that conveyed in the following letter from his servant, Thomas Bushell, in a book called "The First Part of Youth's Errors, Written by Thomas Bushel, the Superlative Prodigall," London, 1628; printed two years after Bacon's death. It runs:—

"A Letter to his approved beloved Mr. John Eliot, Esquire.

"The ample testimony of your true affection towards my Lord Verulam, Viscount St. Albans, hath obliged me your servant. Yet, lest the calumnious tongues of men might extenuate the good opinion you had of his

worth and merit, I must ingenuously confess that myself and others of his servants were the occasions of exhaling his vertues into a darke eclipse; which God knowes would have long endured both for the honour of his King and the good of the Commonaltie; had not we whom his bountie nursed, laid on his guiltlesse shoulders our base and execrable deeds to be scand and censured by the whole Senate of a State, where no sooner sentence was given, but most of us forsoke him, which makes us bear the badge of Jewes to this day. Yet I am confident there were some Godly Daniels amongst us. . . . As for myselfe with shame I must acquit the title, and pleade guilty; which grieves my very soule, that so matchlesse a Peer should be lost by such insinuating caterpillars, who in his owne nature scorn'd the least thought of any base, unworthy, or ignoble act, though subject to infirmities as ordained to the wisest."

On May 7th, 1617, Bacon took his seat in the Court of Chancery. On June 8th ensuing he wrote the following letter to the Duke of Buckingham:—

"MY VERY GOOD LORD,—This day I have made even with the business of the kingdom for common justice. Not one cause unheard. The lawyers drawn dry of all the motions they were to make. Not one petition unanswered. And this, I think, could not be said in our age before. This I speak not out of ostentation, but out of gladness when I have done my duty. I know men think I cannot continue if I should thus oppress myself of business. But that account is made. *The duties of life are more than life.* And if I die now I shall die before the world be weary of me, which in our times is somewhat rare."

What are we to think of a man in so exalted a position, conscious, as he must have been, of abilities far in excess of those of his associates, and having won

to the place of his ambition, from whose heart arises such a noble ideal as that which is enshrined in the maxim, "The duties of life are more than life"?

Bacon, in his first four terms, made 8,798 orders and decrees, and freed more than 35,000 suitors in his court from the law's uncertainty. One of his sayings was, "Fresh justice is sweetest." Scarcely one of Bacon's decisions was ever reversed.

"Great events from little causes spring." It is a well-authenticated fact that the beginning of the malice which ultimately ruined Bacon resulted from some angry words spoken by Bacon to Mr. Secretary Winwood about a dog. Winwood, in Bacon's presence, cruelly beat his dog when lying on a stool. Bacon remonstrated, "Every gentleman did love a dog." From that moment Winwood sought opportunities of discrediting and injuring Bacon, and circumstances in connection with a proposed marriage offered by Coke—who was always Bacon's enemy—to Buckingham's younger brother, enabled Winwood, who was the intermediary negotiator, to make Buckingham hostile to Bacon. The whole intrigue is too voluminous to be related here, but the records are easily accessible, and to some extent amusing reading. Although matters were patched up with Buckingham, both he and Coke, from the time of this episode, were on the alert to do Bacon injury. Perhaps a brief summary of the links in the chain which pulled down Bacon might usefully be given.

Shortly after the above incidents a great public outcry arose about the abuse of patents and monopolies granted to Court favourites. Three of the most grievous to the public welfare were held by Buckingham's friends Mompesson, Villiers, and Maule. Bacon confidentially warned Buckingham that trouble was inevitable. He also warned the King. Parliament was ferociously

determined to air the popular grievances. Sir Francis Mitchell, a lawyer and Justice of the Peace, held responsible for the forfeiture of the recognisances of ale-houses, was sent to the Tower. The House laid down the rule: "If anyone accused for a grievance do justify it in this House of Parliament, it is an indignity to the House, and for this the House may send anyone to the Tower."

Frequent conferences between the Commons and Lords took place with the object of striking at the *referees* and others responsible for the form and subjects of the patents. Bacon was one of the referees. A "Committee of Grievances" was constituted. Abuses of all kinds were at once brought before it. It was alleged that the Registrars in Chancery made and drew up orders themselves, and fastened them upon counsel. A man named John Churchill seems to have been the principal offender, and also accuser. Bacon found him in office when he accepted the Seals, and on discovering his malpractices dismissed him. He was too clement. Had he punished him with fine and imprisonment events might have resulted differently. This man was now Bacon's most active enemy, and was used as an instrument by Coke and the Villierses, who had an eye to Bacon's high office. When Bacon heard that his enemies were endeavouring to trump up some charge against him, he wrote to Buckingham: "I know I have clean hands and a clean heart, and, I hope, a clean house for friends and servants. But Job himself, or whoever was the justest judge, by such hunting for matters against him as hath been used against me, may for a time seem foul, specially in a time when greatness is the mark and accusation in the game. And if this be to be a Chancellor, I think if the Great Seal lay upon the Hounslow Heath nobody would take it up."

Bacon was soon hunted down, and made no sport for his pursuers. He would only have been sent to the

Tower, and perhaps the block, by any resistance. The only course was to confess that the charges, such as they were, and for what they were worth, were true, and rely upon the mercy of the King. His hands were clean but his house was foul. There were people in his house both dishonest and treacherous. Every public man in the England of the Tudors and the Stuarts entered on his public career with the possibility in his mind of ending it in the Tower or on the scaffold. Bacon warned the King with prophetic vision—to be fulfilled thirty years later—"Those that strike at your Chancellor will strike at your crown. I wish that as I am the first I may be the last of sacrifices."

In *Troilus and Cressida* we have the line regarding *sacrifice* to appease a divinity—

"The victim offered must be unspotted."

Bacon was far more anxious for the King than for himself.

John Churchill actually lodged certain information accusing the Chancellor of receiving bribes from suitors whilst their cases were pending. It was upon this that the High Court's judgment was decreed, and it is fair to recognise that Buckingham did, at the last moment, append a dissentient note.

Bacon was thrown into the Tower. James was in a state of terror. Bacon was afraid in exculpating himself more fully that he would pull down the sovereign; but he peremptorily demanded of Buckingham his release from the Tower—which was granted. The fine also was remitted. Bacon subsequently said: "I was the justest judge that was in England these fifty years; but it was the justest censure in Parliament that was there two hundred years"—that is, that he, personally, was spotless and blameless; but that the system of which he was the official head was reprehensible, and that the day of reform was long overdue.

It was immediately afterwards that we hear of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII.*, containing the immortal passage in the mouth of Wolsey—

“Had I but served my God with half the zeal
I served my King, He would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies.”

In his “Apology for Essex,” Bacon writes:—

“Any honest man that hath his heart well planted will forsake his King rather than forsake God, and forsake his Friend rather than forsake his King. And yet will forsake any earthly commodity, yea, his own life in some cases, rather than forsake his Friend.”

Ben Jonson said of him : “I could never bring myself to condole with the great man after his fall, knowing as I did that no accident could do harm to his virtue, kindness, peaceableness and patience.”

Sir Tobie Matthew, his life-long friend and constant correspondent, called him “a friend unalterable to his friends ; a man most sweet in his conversation and ways ; it is not his greatness that I admire, but his virtue.”

Dr. Rawley, Bacon's chaplain (and executor), says : “I have been induced to think that if ever there were a beam of knowledge derived from God upon any man in these modern times, it was upon Francis Bacon.”

Dean Church describes him as “one with whom the whole purpose of living was to do great things, to enlighten and elevate his race, to enrich it with new powers, to lay in store for all ages to come a source of blessings which should never fail.”

All who knew him best loved him most. This well accords with Bacon's prayer.

“Remember, oh Lord ! how Thy servant hath walked before Thee ; remember what I have first sought and what hath been principal in my intentions. I have loved Thy assemblies, I have mourned for the divisions of Thy Church, I have delighted in the brightness of

Thy Sanctuary. This vine which Thy right hand hath planted in this nation, I have ever prayed with Thee that it might have the first and the latter rain; and that it might stretch its branches to the seas and to the floods. The state and bread of the poor have been precious in mine eyes; I have hated all cruelty and hardness of heart. I have, *though in a despised weed*, procured the good of all men."

The "despised weed" has never been satisfactorily explained, except by the supposition that it refers to works of his which would not be regarded as conducive to his personal reputation. I have much to add on this subject hereafter.

Ridiculous falsehoods have become current in reference to his treatment of the Earl of Essex. In spite of his most urgent remonstrances, Essex persisted in attempts at rebellion, and when Elizabeth insisted upon Bacon conducting the case against him, in his official capacity, and upon his subsequently drawing up "A Declaration of his Practices and Treasons," Bacon so palliates his offences that the Queen violently remonstrated with him because "he could not forget his old respect for the traitor," and she had the whole book printed anew. Even in its amended form it was perhaps the most gentle and moderate State Paper ever furnished, and was obviously conceived in sorrow, not in anger.

In the meantime, in the realm of pure intellect, Bacon, by the admission of civilised mankind, reigns supreme. He was the founder of that process by which truth in every section of human thought has been attained, in contradistinction to the universal habit before he rose like the sun to dissipate ignorance and superstition. Before he appeared, all thinkers approached the problems of life and phenomena with preconceived ideas as to how they OUGHT to be accounted for. They formed their *à priori* theories, their syntheses, and then

proceeded to twist and bend their intellects to subserve those preconceptions. It was reserved for Bacon to emancipate himself from this habit, and to deal with facts and phenomena on their actual merits, to observe them carefully and to *deduce from* them rather than *attribute to* them. No matter what men had believed before his time, he had only been in the world a very few years when it struck him that these old ways, this tyranny of unsupported beliefs, were nonsensical, and that there is a light within man which, if he would allow himself to regard and be guided by it, would lead him onwards upon solid ground to a happier region than he had ever discovered in the then past ages. Bacon incarnated the new birth of the human mind and soul.

What, then, might we expect to find as characterising all his writings? The answer is COMMON SENSE. Before his time it was the most uncommon quality on earth.

What is one of the most distinguishing qualities of all the "Shakespeare" literature? Common sense. I have never read one of the plays without being struck with this. When we think of the author of those plays, how incontestably we form an idea of a being of mild, benignant common sense, of intensely human sympathetic nature, whose wit, whose sarcasm, whose poetry, whose imagination are all subdued to that medium of common sense in which it is evident that the author always worked. That is the reason why this literature has taken such a hold upon mankind; for not merely was the author a man "*for all time*," but for all humanity. It is the Germans who say *they* actually *discovered* "Shakespeare." The French love him hardly less. Our children, the Americans, we know regard him—that is the AUTHOR—as semi-divine. Pilgrimages to the shrine of Stratford-on-Avon have been almost as

numerous as to those of all the nominally sacred religions, and, it is to be feared, with as little basis of objective truth as is possessed by many of them.

Well, then, no one will dispute the statement that Bacon was the pioneer of common-sense methods, and the "Shakespeare" literature is impregnated with that curious and, before Bacon's time, rare quality.

But the years 1561 to 1626 were a dangerous period for common sense. Anyone who started up to contradict received opinions and persisted in running his head against the ramparts of ignorance, prejudice and the vested interests of the epoch, would be certain to break it, even if Elizabeth or James did not cut it off.

The fate of Bruno, Galileo, etc., proves the madness of publishing knowledge in advance of the epoch. Bruno visited Bacon in England some years before he was burned by the Inquisition, in Italy.

Therefore, anyone with the ultimate good of his fellow-creatures and their posterity at heart had to be extremely cautious and to proceed very slowly. He must convey the precious seed he bore in special vessels and sow it in suitable, sheltered places, unless it was to be trampled out or blown away.

This consideration brings me to the necessity of glancing for a moment at the air of esoteric mystery which, apart from all suggestions of Bacon's authorship of the "Shakespeare" literature, is associated with Bacon's acknowledged work—I do not say of *all* his *works*. But what seems to have been the impulse which moved a learned English lady, Mrs. Pott, to devote fifty years to the study of Bacon's career is the belief that Francis re-founded a secret society—the Rosicrucians—the purpose of which was to keep alight and hand on to future ages the lamp of knowledge. I do not personally propose to deal with this aspect of Bacon's phenomenal existence. It is the study of a life-time, and the more

efficiently Bacon might have directed that society, the more difficult must it necessarily be to lay bare its workings. I believe there was, and is, such a society, and I am inclined to think that its secrecy has outlived the period prescribed by Bacon, and that many keys, or "open sesames," have been lost. Meantime we have Mrs. Pott's wonderful book, "Francis Bacon and his Secret Society," containing amongst other things hundreds of diagrams of paper-marks, and these alone are fraught with fascinating interest and suggestions of thrilling possible meanings. The cost of the frames necessary for making these marks is a matter of the utmost astonishment.

I will also pass by all questions of secret CYPHERS and "cryptograms" in the "Shakespeare" literature. I will not pronounce a personal opinion as to whether there *is* a cypher. If you believe Mrs. Gallup, who is sincerely convinced that she has discovered one such cypher—the biliteral—the *whole story of Bacon's birth, life and work, and his modus operandi with reference to the "Shakespeare" plays by name, is clearly stated.* Bacon in his "De Augmentis," in a chapter headed "Of Cyphers," does give an explanation, with examples how to work it, of a biliteral cypher devised by himself; the same that Mrs. Gallup professes to work. He is known to have invented several systems of cyphers. But I do not call in the aid of cyphers for the thesis I am maintaining. If it cannot be proved without them, I am sure the popular idol will not be overthrown, for they must ever remain "caviare to the general." But Mr. Harold Bayley, in his book, "The Tragedy of Sir Francis Bacon," gives extracts from Mrs. Gallup's sincerely alleged decipherings, of such a remarkable character, so original a dialectic, in such precise reproduction of the contemporary orthography and recording such strange thoughts or facts—if they be facts—that it is hard to believe that Mrs. Gallup or anyone else could have invented them.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL CONSIDERATIONS.

THE Stratfordian case is based upon the most extreme improbability that it is possible to conceive—this no one will deny. This aspect of the matter may be put into the proverbial nutshell when one has to consider which is the more probable—that a man of aristocratic birth and the highest political connections, who possessed all the knowledge found in the “Shakespeare” literature, which practically comprises all the knowledge then extant amongst the leaders of European thought and society, should have written that literature, or that it was written by a man of whom not even his most ardent worshippers venture to assert positively that he ever went to school, and concerning whom all agree that his scholastic education—if he had any—ceased at about the age of 14; who from that age was pre-occupied in obtaining a livelihood—being for several years a butcher’s apprentice—under conditions of grinding family poverty.

Although no one can yet prove with *mathematical* certainty that Francis Bacon wrote “Shakespeare,” there is, morally, conclusive evidence that the unimportant actor born at Stratford-on-Avon, whose interests centred there all his life, and who retreated there for many years before his death, and who was known as “William Shakspur,” could not write “Shakespeare.”

I have already adverted to the point that if he did not, there was only one man who could—Francis Bacon. Is it worth anyone’s while to dispute this? There have been several wild and fantastic alternative suggestions, the most notable perhaps by a

lively German who names the Earl of Rutland. It is rather a curious coincidence that from records lately unearthed at Belvoir Castle, the seat of the Mannors' family, represented by the present Duke of Rutland, it appears that in 1613 (some years after Shaksper of Stratford had retired from the stage and three years before his death) he was actually employed with his friend and fellow-actor, Burbage, in painting emblems or emblems for the Earl at Belvoir, for which they were paid forty-four shillings. We therefore have it that Shaksper was then doing some non-literary work for a small remuneration. This scarcely renders his authorship of the literature more probable.

It is hardly exaggeration to say that a disregard of probability in this question almost postulates insanity!

I speak of "Shaksper" as distinguished from *Shakespeare*. Why? Not because I attach much importance to the spelling of the name. In those days thought was as advanced, as subtle, as refined, as deep and wide-embracing as it is now, or ever can be. *It is the "Shakespeare" literature which proves it.*

But the orthographical mould into which that thought was to flow was by no means settled. The orthography was still in a state of flux. So you will find Bacon himself sometimes spelling the same word differently on the same page. I could feel no assurance in an argument based upon the spelling of the name of the person called by us moderns William Shakespeare, but who himself never spelt his name that way. There are twenty or thirty different ways in which the family of this Stratford man spelt their name—Shagspere, Shaxper, Shaxburd, Shakspurre, &c.—and in the only reputed specimens of his handwriting, the five signatures, the name is spelt *Shakspere*, or in the last discovery at the Record Office (a sixth signature?—"Will Shakpr.") *In the Marriage Bond of 1582 it is spelt SHAGSPERE*. On

September 4th, 1568, Shakspeare's father is entered on the register of Stratford, being elected High Bailiff as "Mr. John Shakysper."

But I *do* attach importance to the *sound* of a name, and I regard that as very significant. But in all the title-pages, so soon as an author's name appears, it is William or W. Shakespeare, with two exceptions, where it is spelt as Shakspeare. I have personally studied the title-pages of every item of the "Shakespeare" productions. The majority of the plays were published as quarto pamphlets, and in the first instance *anonymously*. Some, after the first or second editions, bore the name "William Shakespeare," and on by far the larger number, down to the last edition, that name is printed with a hyphen—"William Shake-speare," which could only have been pronounced in such a way, even at that time, as to suggest the shaking or brandishing of a spear. This recalls Pallas Minerva—the Goddess of Wisdom—and Ben Jonson's verses prefixed in the First Folio of the plays—speaking of "Shake-speare's well-tornéd lines," run :—

" In each of which he seems to shake a lance
As brandished at the eyes of ignorance."

This, therefore, establishes the fact beyond dispute, that the name "Shake-speare" did convey the idea of Wisdom attacking Ignorance, and that it was not *necessarily* the name of any living person.

That is a very great thing to establish. The best that could be said by a defender of the Stratford faith would be that Jonson was punning upon the name of Shakspeare. But why should he do so? Why make a pun when the actual name as printed conveyed the meaning? We know that this was not the *actual* name of the author.

Suppose the author desired to keep his name a secret? The procedure would have been precisely that

which is observable in connection with the appearance of the "Shakespeare" literature. At first anonymous; then an actor comes to be known whose name sounds very like "Shakespeare," and as this man had acquired considerable influence in the management of the principal theatre, it probably flashed upon the author's mind that by adding the Christian name of this man, and spelling the surname more consonantly to the purpose he had in view, he could completely cover up his tracks. Not merely had he got a first-rate *nom de plume*, but also a real personality to assist the disguise. *There is every reason to believe that the illiteracy of this person, and his natural business instinct, or shall we say greed, made his adoption for this purpose all the easier. There does not seem to have been anybody contemporary with Shakespeare who gave him credit for literary ability.* The very few and doubtful allusions made to him during his lifetime are contemptuous and scornful. Besides these I now immediately mention, I will deal with other important allusions under a special heading hereafter.

Matthew Arnold says "*he trod on earth unguessed at.*" Jonson uses the expression—which is admitted to refer to the actor—"Poet-ape," and says, "his works are e'en the frippery of wit." Then we have Greene writing in a book called "*A Groatsworth of Wit,*" published posthumously by Chettle, in 1592, warning Marlowe, Peele, and Nash—authors—against the bad faith of actors, of whom he speaks as "those puppets that speake from our mouths, those anticks garnisht in our colours. Is it not strange that I, to whom they all have beene beholding, is it not like that you, to whom they all have beene beholding, shall, were ye in that case that I am now, be both at once of them forsaken—yes, trust them not, for there is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that, with his tyger's heart wrapped in a Player's hide, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blanke verse as the best of you, and

being an absolute *Johannes factotum* is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a Country."

Then there is a curious play called "The Return from Parnassus" (author unknown), but it was acted in Cambridge between 1597 and 1602, in which the expression occurs :—

"With mouthing words that better wits have framed,
They purchase lands, and now Esquires are namde."

These quotations give rise to most important reflections—if not inferences—"Works, the frippery of wit." It is generally held that "Poet-ape" means Jonson's THEN opinion of Shakspeare, the actor. It seems, then, that this man was credited with works. Is it possible that a great scholar, critic, and playwright like Jonson could regard what we know as the "Shakespeare" Plays as "the frippery of wit"? Yes; in the then current meaning of "frippery."

Mr. Greenwood has an illuminative note on this point. "Frippery—old clothes, cast-off garments. The French 'fripier'—a dealer in old clothes. Trinculo, in *The Tempest*, says, 'We know what belongs to a frippier.' Cotgrave gives, 'Friperie—broker's shop: street of brokers or of fripiers.' And 'Fripier—a mender or trimmer-up of old garments, and a seller of them so mended.'"

Jonson's epigram therefore excludes the idea that Shakspeare composed anything original. For further absolute proof of Jonson's meaning I refer to Mr. Greenwood's book, pp. 456, 457.

What works did Shakspeare produce other than those we revere? There were none, except a few doggerel verses hereinafter mentioned. But Jonson says more in this epigram. It runs :—

"Poor Poet-Ape, that would be thought our chief,
Whose works are e'en the frippery of wit,
From brokerage is become so bold a thief—
As we, the robbed, leave rage and pity it.

At first he made low shifts, would pick and glean,
 Buy the reversion of old plays. Now, grown
 To a little wealth and credit in the scene,
 He takes up all, makes each man's wit his own,
 And told of this, he slights it. Tut, such crimes
 The sluggish, gaping auditor devours :
 He marks not whose 'twas first and after times
 May judge it to be his, as well as ours.
 Fool, as if half eyes would not know a fleece
 From locks of wool, or shreds from the whole piece."

And in a publication called "Confessio Fraternitatis," Chap. XII. (anonymous), 1615, there is this extraordinary passage :—

"Our age doth produce many such, one of the greatest, being a stage player, a man with sufficient ingenuity for imposition."

Jonson's epigram was prophetic, for there are plenty of "*sluggish, gaping auditors*" still extant, ready to accept anything without examination !

Two of the earliest of the Shakespeare Plays were produced according to the views of recognised authorities in or about the year 1589-90, and in the following year (1591) Robert Greene, *referring to the practice* of concealing the authorship of plays under other names, wrote, in his "Farewell to Folly": "Others, if they come to write or publish anything in print which for *their calling and gravity* being loth to have any profaned pamphlets pass under their hand, get some other to set his name to their verses. Thus is the ass made proud by this *underhand brokery*. And he that cannot write true English without the aid of clerks of parish churches will needs make himself the father of interludes."

It is quite certain that the foregoing quotations relate to Shakspeare the actor. One of the few things we know about him is that he bought lands, died a considerable landed proprietor, that he applied for a coat-

of-arms for his father, that his first application was based upon false representations—as Halliwell Phillipps admits—that it was refused, and it was never made clear that it was officially granted ; but Shakspeare assumed it. The man was wealthy, and he was vain, and what we should call now-a-days a snob.

FURTHER HISTORICAL ALLUSIONS TO SHAKESPEARE.

THOSE of BEN JONSON, of course, are infinitely the most important. All Stratfordians admit that he is their sheet-anchor, and that his references constitute Shakspeare's title-deeds.

I make the preliminary observation that Jonson's utterances are so contradictory that, if given in a law court, his evidence would have been disallowed. But basing nothing upon this, what does that section of them favourable to the Stratford authorship amount to? First, the address prefacing the Folio of 1623, and had not that contained the expression as applied to "the author," "Swan of Avon," the belief that Shakspeare of Stratford wrote the plays would have faded to indistinctness. The Folio of 1623 was the first and only complete collection of the Plays.

This address has been analysed by some of the acutest minds, and contains many curious features. The first that strikes me is that "THE AUTHOR" is printed in such enormous capitals, and "Mr. William Shakspeare" in such small lettering, that some *meaning* is intended to be suggested thereby.

In face of the overwhelming mass of *circumstantial* indications that Shakspeare was *not* the author, one has to accept the theory that Jonson set himself to prevent the discovery of the real author. The literature had always passed under the *nom de plume* of "William" Shakspeare, and the actor (whose name sounded so much like it that he was carelessly regarded as the author, none of the public taking the trouble to in-

investigate whether he were or not) was known to be closely connected with Stratford-on-Avon, and to have lived and died there.

As events have proved, no more effective way of throwing the contemporary public and posterity off the scent could have been devised ; yet those large capitals seem to me to have been used as a salve to Jonson's conscience.

But why "Swan"? Jonson was a pedant, and delighted in classical legends. Hear the Rev. Walter Begley on this subject, for I cannot improve upon his words:—

"In that word 'swan' there is much more than meets the eye or the ear, and whatever Jonson might mean by such a term, it is quite clear that the Stratford actor was a 'swan-like scholar' in one sense, for Shakespeare's Folio, where the 'Swan of Avon' is first heard of, has certainly preserved from Lethe's lake and delivered to immortality many precious pages which otherwise would have decayed by the remorseless process of time or been swallowed up in the lake waters."

"This swan story appears in Ariosto, and there is a fine illustration of swans rescuing some great names from the current and carrying them to the temple of immortal fame, which appears among the engravings of Harrington's English Translation made in the last years of the sixteenth century, and there is no doubt the swan story was well known to poets and literary men of that time. *Studioso* in the 'Returne from Parnassus,' refers to it thus:—

" 'Fond world that nere thinkes on that aged man,
'That Ariosto's old swift paced man,
Whose name is Tyme, who never lins to run,
Loaden with bundles of decayed names,
The which in Lethe's lake he doth intombe,
Save only those which swan-like schollers take,
And do deliver from that greedy lake.' "

Can it really be that Jonson, who would certainly know Ariosto's allusion, looked at Shakspeare as a "swan-like scholler," who, in a certain sense had delivered a greater genius than himself from Lethe's lake, and therefore used the expression "Swan of Avon"?

Bacon mentions these swans in his "De Augmentis," and describes the legend thus:—"Ariosto feigns that at the end of the thread of every man's life there hangs a little medal or collar on which his name is stamped; and that time waits upon the shears of Atropos, and as soon as the thread is cut, snatches the medals, carries them off, and presently throws them into the river Lethe; and about the river there are many birds flying up and down, who catch the medals, and after carrying them round and round in their beak a little while, let them fall into the river, only there are some swans which, if they get a medal with a name, immediately carry it off to a temple consecrated to immortality" (from Spedding's "Bacon's Works," Vol. IV., page 307).

On the assumption that Bacon wrote "Shakespeare" and determined that the fact should not become common knowledge, is it not natural to suppose that when Jonson was residing with Bacon at Gorhambury, and preparing the Folio for publication, some such colloquy as the following took place? *Jonson admittedly wrote the preface, signed by Hemminge and Condell.* "What title shall I give him?" says Jonson. "Oh," says Bacon, "call him the Swan of Avon, for he flew away from London to his native Avon with my medal in his mouth, and he is the swan who is to take it to the temple consecrated to immortality."

The most astounding feature in reviewing the utterances of Jonson regarding Shakespeare is that only once and quite suddenly, in this preface to the Folio, does he say anything honourable to him, and then it is so extreme—amounting to adoration—as to be accountable

only by his having acquired some revolutionary—or revelatory—knowledge of the author of the plays.

Previous to the appearance of the Folio, not merely are the better known Jonsonian utterances of the most unflattering nature, but wrapped up in Jonson's own plays are highly offensive and quite unmistakable allusions to the Stratford actor. Thus in "Every Man out of His Humour," published in 1601, Act III., Scene i., we have a conversation between three characters, most bitterly satirising the tricks by which Shakspeare tried to obtain a grant of arms in 1596. For particulars I refer to Mr. Greenwood's book—pp. 461—463. Jonson in his "Poetaster" (1601) has another passage in which "Pantalabus" is referred to in terms of bitter sarcasm. All the thrusts are consonant with the known facts of Shakspeare's life, character and circumstances. Pantalabus is a name invented from the Greek for TAKING UP ALL—"he takes up all." Further he is a "parcel poet," *i.e.*, parcel gilt—on the surface only, but really of base metal.

Jonson in "Every Man in His Humour," which was produced on the stage in 1598, sneers at the *Winter's Tale*, because the unities are violated, in these words:—

"To make a child now swaddled, to proceed man, and then shoot up in one beard and weed, past three score years," etc., etc.

It is perhaps as well to give the following brief summary of Ben Jonson's allusions:—

1598—"He degrades the stage. He is ignorant of the ordinary rules of dramatisation.

1601—He barbarises the English language, and brings all arts and learning into contempt. He wags an ass's ears. He is an ape.

1614—His tales are but drolleries. He mixes his head with other men's heels. (The *Tempest* has this allusion.)

1616—He is a poet-ape, an upstart, a hypocrite and a thief. His works are but the frippery of wit.

1619—He wanted art and sometimes sense.

1623—He is the "soul of the age," the greatest writer of ancient or modern times.

1637—"I loved him this side idolatry as much as any."

As Mr. Harold Bayley observes in his book, already mentioned, now unfortunately out of print, "The Tragedy of Sir Francis Bacon"—the key to this paradox must be found in the developed intimacy between Jonson and Francis Bacon, resulting in Jonson from about 1620 taking up his residence with Bacon at Gorhambury and becoming temporarily one of his "good pens."

Visiting Drummond at Hawthornden in 1618, whither he walked from London, Bacon told him that he "loved not to see poesie going on any feet but the dactyl and spondee," so that they were then intimate friends. Jonson said to Drummond :

"Shakspeer wanted arte. Shakespere in a play brought in a number of men saying they had suffered ship wrack in Bohemia. Wher y^r is no sea neer by some 100 miles." "Wanted art!" Fancy this from the man who was so soon to record for all posterity that he "confessed his writings to be such, as neither man nor Muse can praise too much!"

Said I not well that Jonson's utterances are so contradictory that were the issue one of life or death no judge would accept his evidence?

Much has been made of the passage in Jonson's "Discoveries," written some years after Bacon's death, under the heading "*De Shakespeare Nostrati*." This seems *primâ facie* to make a case that "the players" regarded Shakspeare as the author; but it admittedly

contains so gross a mis-statement in connection with the manuscripts, "without a blot," as Hemminge and Condell professed to have received them—Jonson putting these words into their mouths—that no reliance can be placed upon it. It is, however, severely critical of the author's style. Jonson says, "Would he had blotted out a thousand lines." "He flowed with that facility that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped." "Many times he fell into those things which could not escape laughter." That "the players chose the circumstance" (of the unblotted manuscripts) "to commend Shakspeare by that wherein he most faulted." Yet in the address Jonson says of him—whom he apostrophises as "the starre of poets," the "soul of the age," "who when his sockes were on" equalled "all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome sent forth":

"Who casts to write a living line must sweat,
(Such as thine are) and strike the second heat
Upon the Muses' anvile turne the same,
(And himself with it) that he thinkes to frame.
For a good poet's made as well as borne,
And such wert thou."

That was what he says of "MY" Shakespeare. It seems that his—Jonson's—Shakespeare was a very different person from the Stratford gentleman.

My own explanation is this:—first, Jonson, between his latest allusions to Shakspeare and the time when he decided to supervise the issue of the Folio, had learned that Bacon was the author. He had also found that he could not persuade Bacon to own up. There is that celebrated Ode of his to Bacon on the occasion of his birthday:

"It seems as though a mystery thou didst,
Let it be known, 'tis a brave cause of joy,
It were a narrow pleasure—kept thy own."

Bacon clearly refused to "let it be known," but Jonson, desirous of getting a good "send off" for the Folio, writes an ode to him whom he knew to be the real author, and necessarily had to yield to the stipulation that the name by which his writings were known should remain unaltered.

With his mind filled with the personal knowledge, the love, the reverence, the admiration, "this side idolatry," with which contact with Bacon had inspired him, he conveys, almost unconsciously, all these sentiments. It is "my" Shakespeare, it is the AUTHOR whom he apostrophises, it is the "well torned and true filed lines" of that author, in which "he seems to shake a lance as brandisht at the eyes of ignorance." It is the author who, when figuring as a dramatist ("when his socks were on") who "equalled insolent Greece and haughty Rome," who was "not for an age but all time."

To give verisimilitude to the personality indicated by the name, he attributes to him "Small Latine and less Greeke."

This is so obviously untrue of the author as to further discredit Jonson if he is to be taken *au piéd de la lettre* and as having no *arrière pensée*. Every "man of letters" knows that the author reveals a knowledge of at least the following classic writers:—Aristotle, Plato, Euripedes, Catullus, Sophocles, Pliny, Lucretius, Tibullus, Statius, Plutarch, Seneca, Tacitus, Horace, Cicero, Ovid and Virgil. Many of the works were then untranslated, and we have Churton Collins's assurance of his knowledge of Greek.

Jonson wishes he could still see the swans taking their flights upon the "bankes of Thames." The contrast of the two rivers, Avon and Thames, is suggestive. He knew that Bacon would write no more plays. That in the "Discoveries," written years afterwards, he becomes critical of works which he had described as

those of "the starre of poets," and the hero of his "idolatry" was due to the old Adam of pedantry cropping out again. The plays violate the unities and depart from Jonson's classic ideas of the propriety of such productions in the same way as did the music of Hans Sachs depart from the classic canons of the Meistersingers. He could, moreover, "let himself go," because Bacon was not implicated by name, and, on the whole, his remarks would tend still further to conceal the author's personality. Ben Jonson was quite right. The AUTHOR did shine forth and become a "constellation" for all time.

As to the other poems which preface the Folio, Jonson must have looked round and beat up for suitable hands to write something. Leonard Digges sent in two compositions—one, Jonson accepted, that referring to the "Stratford Moniment"; the other was so ridiculous and at variance with the obvious nature of the plays and the qualities of the real author that he rejected it. This other contains the lines:—

"Next nature only helped him for look thorow,
This whole Booke, thou shalt find he doth not borrow,
One phrase from Greekes nor Latines imitate,
Nor once from vulgar languages translate."

How great the contrast between these three or four memorial odes written to order and for a purpose many years after the death of the Stratford actor, and the large number of poems and valedictory compositions spontaneously poured forth immediately upon the death of Francis Bacon! To these I refer later on.

Nothing was more invariable than the custom of writing funeral odes upon the death of any author of even moderate distinction.

To conclude my review of Jonson's allusions, one of the silliest arguments put forward by Stratfordians—and a very learned lawyer has made much of it to me,

personally—is that “honest Ben would never have been party to a fraud in concealing the name.” Frank Harris also tried to choke off questioners by the same plea and says, “Jonson could have had no motive for not telling the truth.” “Every schoolboy knows” (to adopt Macaulay’s favourite mode of deriding those whom he considered less superior persons than himself) that Miss Evans wrote under the name of George Eliot. That she was also in private life spoken of as Mrs. G. H. Lewes! ” Were all their friends and her publishers guilty of “fraud”? Stratfordians must indeed be at their wits’ ends to talk such nonsense.

Next, as to other allusions: CHETTLE—that is now abandoned on all sides. The words are clear, and but for Stratfordian fanaticism could never have been read as applying to Shakspeare. But they have been made the occasion for the exhibition of most shocking literary dishonesty on the part of Sidney Lee and Churton Collins. Mr. Greenwood sets this out in detail (pages 316—319) of his “Shakespeare Problem Re-stated.” These gentlemen have deliberately written the name of Shakespeare into Chettle’s record. Then, Garnett and Gosse do the same in their “English Literature.” Mr. Greenwood’s comment is, “a more dishonest method of writing biography can hardly be imagined.”

MERES I deal with hereafter under the heading of “The Sonnets.”

JOHN DAVIES, of Hereford (1610) writes lines to “our English Terence, Mr. Will Shakespeare,” and addressing him as “good Will,” says that, “according to some, if he had not played some kingly parts in sport, he might have been a companion for a king” and “been a king among the meaner sort.”

It is very notable that Terence was throughout his life accused of not writing his plays himself. I incline to believe that the accusation was unjust, and the outcome of the jealousy of inferior writers. His works

were of ultra refinement and "caviare to the Romans" (see Smith's "Biographical Dictionary"). From all the known facts about Terence, it is an almost unavoidable inference that John Davies made the comparison to Shakspeare because he knew of this point common to both cases.

Ingleby has a note : "It seems likely that these lines refer to the fact that Shakespere was a player, a profession that was then despised and accounted mean." Even this allusion does not affix authorship upon the actor; it is not more than could be gathered from the title-pages of the plays.

THOMAS FREEMAN, in 1614, refers to "Master Shakespeare," but only in such a way as differentiates the actor from the playwright. WILLIAM BASSE (1622)—one year before the issue of the Folio—has a few lines, beginning :—

"Renowned Spenser lye a thought more nye
To learned Chaucer, and rare Beaumont lye
A little nearer Spenser, to make roome
For Shakespeare in your threefold, fowrefold, tombe,
To lodge all fowre in one bed make a shift," etc.

Mr. Greenwood is very entertaining over this. He remarks that, "Basse's title to fame seems to consist in having written these lines only six years after Shakespeare's death, instead of waiting for seven, as Jonson did." Jonson, however, alludes to them in his Folio Address in the comic reservation that he will not lodge Shakespeare by Chaucer or Spenser, or ask Beaumont to be so kind as to lie a little farther for the "very sensible reason that Shakespeare was not buried in Westminster Abbey, as Basse seems to have thought he was"; and had he been aware that his tomb was 100 miles away, Basse could not have written what is actually ridiculous. Mr. Greenwood amusingly adds, "Had Jonson seen the epitaph which Shakespeare"—William Hall tells us—"directed to be cut upon his

tombstone, and is now to be seen of all men ('Curst be he yt moves my bones') he would have known that it was quite useless to ask him to make room for anybody."

AUBREY.—He was born ten years after Shakspeare's death. All his allusions are the merest gossip of one whom the orthodox Halliwell Phillips describes as a "detestable gossip." None are creditable to Shakspeare.

THOMAS FULLER.—One of the most impudent of Stratfordian devices is to put forward as an argument Fuller's remarks: "Many were the wit-combates between Shakspeare and Jonson, which two I beheld like a Spanish great galleon and an English man-of-war," etc., etc. The passage is too well known. What Fuller says is: "I behold"—not beheld.—As he was eight years old when Shakspeare died, this fine flight of imagination only came to him many years after that event. Fuller seems to have known but little of Shakspeare, for alluding to the "warlike sound of his surname," he says that from it "some may conjecture him of a military extraction!"

MANNINGHAM tells an anecdote which I detail hereafter.

CUTHBERT BURBAGE.—Shakspeare, classified with Heminge and others, is referred to in 1635 by Cuthbert Burbage in a petition to the Earl of Pembroke, then Lord Chamberlain (Burbage being one of the proprietors of the playhouses which had been made famous by the production of the Shakesperean plays) as a "man player" and a "deserving man." This, twelve years after the dedication of the Folio to the Earl of Pembroke, one of the "Incomparable Pair!" Did he refrain from reminding the Earl that this "deserving man" was the author of these immortal dramas, because he was aware that the Earl knew it was not so? *I will again refer to this, as it alone destroys the Stratfordian claim.*

These are the very best of the allusions upon which the Stratfordians base their contention.

There is not one allusion yet discovered which unambiguously affixes upon the Stratford actor the authorship or the personal reputation of the authorship of the literature. But taking a broad and sensible view of the "allusions" to the actor, is it not ridiculous to ignore the fact that he was practically unknown? Of all the great galaxy of splendid writers, of highly-placed personages, many of whom, like Sidney, Bacon, Pembroke, Raleigh, Cecil, Walsingham, Coke, Camden, Hooker, Drake, Hobbes, Inigo Jones, Herbert of Cherbury, Laud, Pym, Hampden, Selden, Walton, Wootton, and Donne, had the strongest literary sympathies and abilities, not one seems to have even known of the existence of this "star of poets," who was to be made a "constellation." Is it possible that in the twenty years of Shakspeare's connection with the stage, not one person with whom he came into contact should have seemed to regard him as an author, instead of being almost awe-struck, as we should be, at contact with such a personality? It is wonderful that hundreds of persons should not have left records of him—that he should not have been the actual leading personage in the literary and social community of the epoch. We know nearly as much about the most insignificant writer of the period as we know of him, but fifty times more about most of his contemporaries. It is senseless to try to account for this otherwise than by recognising that the man was not the author.

The article in "Harper's Magazine" of March, 1910, by C. W. Wallace, perhaps contains more fatuous absurdities than any recent publications. Amongst others: "We have more documentary evidence about Shakespeare than about any other dramatist of his time." Comment would be wasted.

Sir Sidney Lee makes the outrageous statement that

“patient investigation which has been in progress for 200 years, has brought together a mass of biographical details which far exceeds that accessible in the case of any other professional writer.”

If he said exactly the reverse—that investigation 200 times more minute than that directed to any other writer has brought together less biographical detail than in any other instance—he would have spoken the truth.

The only conceivable explanation of his assertion is that the more Lee multiplies his own pages and the freer rein he gives to his own imagination, the more of what he calls biographical “detail” is created. From that point of view there is no reason why the supply should ever cease!

How different the case of Jonson from the day he was entered at Westminster School till he received the King’s pension in his old age. The chorus of poetical tribute at his death was such that a book was necessary to embody it. Apart from the external facts of his life, his quarrels, friendships, letters, conversations, all resting on real contemporary evidence, we have autobiography. *No rational explanation is offered—why we have **not a scrap of autobiography** from such an alleged voluminous writer as Shakspeare.*

Now, again reverting to probability. It is time we considered and contrasted the known facts of the lives of Bacon and Shakspeare of Stratford.

THE LIFE OF SHAKSPERE OF STRATFORD.

THERE are many "lives" of Shakspeare, of Stratford, and *not the slightest justification for one of them.* Their origin is in this wise. The greatest literature in the world is attributed to "William Shakespeare." William Shakspeare of Stratford was the son of parents neither of whom could read or write. We *know* that he was born in 1564. Not one of his self-styled "biographers" dare say, for a fact, that he was ever at school, but they assume and say "doubtless" he *must* have gone to the grammar school of Stratford. We *know* the master's name, but the name of the scholar is not to be found. *It is clear that he gave no indication of marked ability as a youth.* We *know* that of the eighteen town councilors only six could sign their names, notwithstanding the existence of a school in their midst. We *know* that Shakspeare's father fell into financial troubles, and that William was taken into his employ at a very early age, say, 12 to 14, and that employ was a butcher, leather seller and corn dealer. We *know* that at the age of 18 William married a woman named Hathaway, eight years older than himself, and that within *six months* a child was born. There is evidence that the marriage license was drawn for the name of another woman, and there is tradition that Anne Hathaway's brothers had something to say on the subject. We *know* that the wife had three children in all, two being twins—Susannah, the first, and Hamnet and Judith. Hamnet died in youth. We *know* that about the age of 21 or 23 he left his wife and family and came to London. This brings us to 1585 at earliest. We *know* that several of the plays, with the names they now bear, appeared from 1589 at latest, and

that *Love's Labour's Lost* was acted in 1592. The best authorities place its composition in 1588. All the plays were acted before they were published, in many cases some years before, and in some cases they were never published or performed or heard of until they appeared in the First Folio of 1623, or seven years after Shakspeare's death. Between the year of Shakspeare's arrival in London (whenever that exactly was) and the first mention of him in 1593 we know nothing about him. We all, of course, remember what was taught us at school, that his first employment was holding the horses of persons who went into the Globe Theatre. Tradition supports this, but it is not knowledge. We *know* that in 1593 Shakspeare was a member of a company of players who in that year appeared before Queen Elizabeth. But in the "Groatsworth of Wit" we have seen that he was parodied as "Shake-scene," so that between 1585 and 1592 he must have made a sufficient mark to have elicited from Greene the very unflattering opinion expressed in that work. Now it is quite natural that "mouthing others' words" and "buying the reversion of old plays," etc., might have been accomplished in that period, but it is impossible, short of a greater miracle than any recorded in Scripture, that he should have written various plays, all exhibiting wide knowledge, and especially the most learned of all, *Love's Labour's Lost*, which is an irony and sarcasm upon scholastic learning, involving profound classical knowledge in its author. Remember that books were not easy to obtain in those days, and that Shakspeare had to get his living and would have little opportunity for study. The title-page does not claim the original authorship, but only that it is "newly corrected and augmented by him."

Now I pause here to introduce, as regards that particular play, a point which probably dethrones Shak-

sperre and enthrones Francis Bacon. The scene is laid in Navarre, at the Court of the Sovereign. Henry IV. of France was then King of Navarre. In the play he is called Ferdinand. But Lords attending him are called Biron, Longaville and Dumain. *Now these are the names of the actual minister and courtiers there when Anthony Bacon, Francis's brother and incessant correspondent, was residing there, and he remained several years, and it is on record in letters from Anthony, now at the Library of Lambeth Palace, that Anthony desired to come to England about the time this play was to be performed. He was prevented from doing so. It is quite inconceivable that a rustic from Stratford should have got hold of these names from an obscure Court of Southern Europe for a play of his own writing, and it is quite certain that the names were known to both the Bacons, as Francis visited Navarre as well as many European Courts; and, moreover, no one not residing at the Court could have known the actual historical fact that 100,000 crowns was the sum offered to the King of Navarre as a quittance for his claim on Aquitaine, as mentioned in the play. The affair was purely local. If written by Shakspeare there was no conceivable motive for its being published anonymously. By proclaiming himself the author he would have expected to leap into fame immediately. He certainly could not benefit himself by anonymity, and to materially benefit himself all his biographers—from Pope downwards—agree was his purpose in life. The actual passports granted to Anthony by Biron, the Minister, and Dumain were found by Mrs. Chambers Buntin in the British Museum. The play is mentioned in Henslowe's Diary by the name of "Berowne." All the indications are that it was written anonymously and placed in the hands of other writers, for use in Henslowe's theatre. And it will be asked, "Who is Henslowe?" Henslowe was proprietor of the Rose and Fortune theatres. His step-*

daughter married Edward Alleyn, a co-proprietor with Henslowe. Alleyn made a fortune by theatre-keeping (but was originally a man of property by inheritance from his father), and, as we all know, devoted it to founding the "College of God's Gift" at Dulwich, one of our most admirable and wealthy schools.

Henslowe, from 1591 to 1609, kept a Diary, in which he entered day by day the money taken for performances, the sums lent by him to the needy authors whilst writing, and for the purchase of the plays when completed. Here we find the names of most of the known writers mentioned frequently—Decker, Chettle, Drayton, Chapman, Heywood, Marston, Day, Rowley, Haughton, Wilson, Monday, Middleton, &c., including Ben Jonson. But *not a single reference is made to Shakspeare*, either as actor or author. *Perhaps never did negative approximate more nearly to positive evidence.* "Conspicuous by his absence," indeed, is our Stratford hero! Yet Halliwell-Phillipps (Vol. I., p. 97) has the audacity to say that "Shakespeare up to this period had written all his dramas for Henslowe." *This would prove in respect of any plays bearing the name that the actor was not regarded as the author.*

We know that Shakspeare bought his house, "New Place," at Stratford, in 1597. In 1598 he figures as holding "ten quarters of corn" *at a time of famine*. He was selling stone there in 1598. In the same year Richard Quiney wrote a letter asking for a loan of £30. This is the only document in existence addressed to Shakspeare, and I need not say that *none exists from him*.

We find on the records of Stratford, from 1599 to 1605, several transactions indicating that he was lending money, buying parcels of land, suing people for petty debts. In 1607 his daughter Susanna married John Hall at Stratford. In 1613 Shakspeare buys and mortgages a house in London. On February 11th, 1616,

Judith marries Thomas Quiney without a license, and they are arraigned before the Court at Worcester for violation of the law. *Judith was then about 30 years old, but could not read or write. She makes a mark.* But Shakespeare says in the second part of *Henry VI.*, "Ignorance is the curse of God, knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven." It is difficult to understand why Shakspeare doomed his daughter to so evil a condition! Mrs. Hall, his elder daughter, also could not read or recognise her husband's handwriting.

On March 25th, 1616, Shakspeare makes his will. On April 23rd he died. That is all we know of the reputed author of the greatest literature on earth. Yes, we also have his Will *and see that every item he possessed, down to the minutest, is disposed of*, that nothing was left to his wife except by an afterthought and interlineation, his second best bed, and that he also barred her dower. *But there is not one book, nor scrap of printed paper, nor MS.; nothing about copyrights of plays or poems, many of which had yet to come before the world, as we shall see later on.* The plea that the absence of manuscripts is due to their being the property of the theatre is negatived by the facts that Hemminge and Condell seven years after his death say that they "collected" them; therefore the fire at the Globe could not have destroyed them, and they were *certainly not published for the benefit of the theatre.*

The summary comes to this : All that is known with any degree of certainty is that he was born at Stratford-on-Avon, married, and had children there ; went to London, where he became an actor ; acquired wealth ; applied for a title, which was at first refused ; invested money in real estate and in the tithes of his native town ; instituted many lawsuits ; returned to Stratford ; sold malt ; entertained a preacher at his house and drew on the town for one quart of claret wine and one quart of

sack (20 pence) for the occasion; favoured a conspiracy to enclose the commons there; made his will; died (with the subsequent reputation that his death was caused by a surfeit of drinking) and was buried.

It has been unkindly (but quite truthfully) said, "There is not recorded of him one noble or loveable action." Well might Stratfordians take to heart Caliban's apostrophe:—

"I'll be wise hereafter. . . . What a thrice double ass
Was I to take this drunkard for a god,
And worship this dull fool."

It is also known that at a time of distress his wife, having borrowed forty shillings from a neighbour, Shakspeare never repaid it and that his executors had to do so.

As to Shakspeare's death, the orthodox idolaters are in a dilemma. The only report is from an entry in the diary of the Rev. John Ward in the year 1663 (fifty years after the event), which reads: "Shakspeare, Drayton and Ben Jonson had a merry meeting and it seems drank too hard, for Shakspeare died of a feavour there contracted." The orthodox don't like to believe in the drinking orgie, but they cannot afford to discard the flimsiest bond of connection between Shakspeare, Jonson and Drayton. There is no record in the biographies of Jonson or Drayton to confirm such a symposium, and had it been true Jonson could hardly have failed to record it.

Dean Beeching makes a most ludicrous remark regarding Shakspeare's signatures, which may be suitably referred to here. The Dean says, as an excuse for the illiterate character of the three signatures of the will: "As they were written a month before his death they are beyond criticism by any humane person." As he died of a bout of excessive drinking one does not like to

think that he had been intoxicated for so long beforehand !

Mr. Sidney Lee says that the following disreputable story is "the sole anecdote of Shakespeare (Shakspere) which is positively known to have been recorded in his lifetime." It is told by John Manningham, of the Middle Temple, barrister, and is entered in his diary, March 13th, 1601. As it has a most important bearing upon reputation, literary, as well as other, it is worth while to give the entry in full as follows :—

"Upon a time when Burbidge played *Richard III.* there was a citizen gone so far in liking with him that before he went from the play she appointed him to come that night unto her by the name of Richard the Third. Shakespear, overhearing their conclusion, went before, was entertained, and at his game ere Burbidge came. Then message being brought that Richard the Third was at the door Shakespeare caused return to be made that William the Conqueror was before Richard the Third. Shakespeare's name William."

If Shakspere was known to the world as the author, it is simply astounding—in fact, impossible—that Manningham should have made that addendum, "Shakespeare's name William," and no reference to his literary reputation. It is evident that Manningham had not the slightest idea that the player and author were one and the same person.

THE TOMB.

And then his tomb. *No one knows when the first monument was erected, or who did it, or wrote the grotesquely unsuitable inscription, which means that he was a "Nestor in experienced judgment, a Socrates in philosophical genius, and a Virgil in poetic art,"* although Jonson is believed to have written it. But as late as 1656 there was a monument engraved in

Dugdale's "Antiquities of Warwickshire," very different as regards the figure and framework from that now existing. Mr. Greenwood has reproduced this, and the figure is that of a thin-faced, melancholy-looking man, with no pen in his hand and grasping what looks like a sack of wool. Is this a practical pun on Bacon as the occupant of the Woolsack? Be that as it may, the figure resembles Bacon, and the inscription *precisely* describes him. *It does not describe the money-lending local corn-dealer.* It further bears the erroneous statement that the body is "plast within the monument."

So far as can be ascertained, the present monument, with its vulgar figure and goggle eyes, and vacuous, clownish expression, was erected in 1748. Those who put it up were then obsessed by the Shakespearean fame, and took the opportunity to put a pen in its hand and, in fact, to construct a "synthetic" monument. I have personally ascertained from the vicar of the church that nothing definite about this tomb is on the records. That seems an almost incredible thing for about the most celebrated tomb in the world.

A typical example of the gross literary dishonesty of the leading Stratfordian advocates is to be seen in connection with the pictures of this tomb. Dugdale's engraving is, of course, fatal to the contention that we now have the contemporary monument. Sir Sidney Lee states that the present monument was erected before 1623. That may be his opinion; but he also states that "it was first engraved very imperfectly in Rowe's edition of 1709." Sir Sidney may have been ignorant of Dugdale's plate; but *when, after seeing it, he cites Rowe's picture as essentially the same as the present monument*, he makes a false statement, insusceptible of being explained away, as they are quite different, as any one can see at a glance. (I refer to Plates V. and VI., and pages 75 and 76 in Sir Edwin Durning Lawrence's

“Bacon is Shakespeare.”) One must suppose that Lee thinks the mass of readers too stupid or careless to take the opportunity of comparing them, and that it is safe to make his assertion.

Now here we enter upon the threshold of mystery. I have said that I cannot deal with the occult phases of the matter. I will only remark here that everywhere, in all directions, wherever the great secret would naturally stand revealed, some unseen hand seems to have been at work to cut the thread or divert the scent. Thus in Henslowe's diary there are twenty-two admitted forgeries written in by the one or two Shakespearean editors, Malone or Collier for examples, who were allowed the free use of the work. Dulwich College took no note of the book; it was amongst lumber until Malone found it about 1780, and he was allowed to retain it in his possession until 1812. It is hard to believe. J. P. Collier had the unrestricted use of it in 1831, and it is known that he committed some of the forgeries. These are not all directed to Shakespearean associations, but also relate to Marlowe, and probably thereby hangs a tale. One asks, *Why was forgery considered necessary by the greatest experts of the Stratford cult?* So strong has its obsession become that, as I have just indicated, moral considerations and elementary honesty must go by the board to save the wreck of the good ship “Stratford.”

There is a forged letter in the Dean and Chapter of Chester's Museum purporting to be from Shakspeare to Southampton, which, to do them justice, the Stratfordians ignore. That it should continue to be exhibited under such auspices is not very creditable to the clerical authorities.

On a copy of Florio's Montaigne, in the British Museum, there is a signature Willm. Shakspeare, which Dr. C. W. Wallace, of the “New Discoveries,” says is

"William Shakespeare" and the actor's handwriting. But Sir Edward Maunde Thompson has pronounced it "an undoubted forgery." Stratfordians seem to be roaming hither and thither on the chance of being able to sow the tares of falsehood in the field of truth.

The celebrated forgeries of the Irelands were merely the outcome of the fanatical bias of the Shakespeare-olaters. There was the demand; rogues saw their opportunity to provide the supply.

But the most remarkable indication of the unseen hand is furnished by the cover of a number of papers which belonged to Francis Bacon, found in 1867 amongst the muniments of the Duke of Northumberland. It is reproduced in facsimile in Edwin Reed's "*Bacon v. Shakspeare*." The contents were found complete, as indexed, except two of the "Shakespeare" plays, *Richard II.* and *Richard III.*, which *had been cut out*. If only those plays had been found there! What a light they might have thrown upon our present investigation! The following suggests sufficient reason for removing *Richard II.* from Bacon's effects.

There is something very remarkable about this play. It was the first published with the name of "Shake-speare." It was performed by Essex's orders at the Globe (Shakspeare's) Theatre the afternoon before Essex broke into rebellion. Essex had previously accepted the dedication of Hayward's pamphlet containing a 'Story of the First Year of King Henry the Fourth,' which Queen Elizabeth regarded as 'a seditious prelude.' Bacon was compelled to appear before the lords and denounce the performance of *Richard II.* as an act of treason. *The Queen never for a moment believed that the name used on the title was that of the real author* No notice was taken of Shakspeare, but the Queen ordered Bacon to put on the rack any suspected author. Bacon was greatly embarrassed,

and replied : ' Nay, madam, rack not his body, rack his style. Give him paper and pens, with help of books ; bid him carry on his tale. By comparing the two parts I will tell you if he be the true man.' "

It seems, nevertheless, to have come out that Bacon was the author of *Richard II.*, for, as counsel for the prosecution, he wrote to the Queen begging to be excused from bringing up this play as evidence against Essex, on the ground that " I, having been wronged by bruits before, this would expose me to them more, and it would be said I gave in evidence *mine own tales*."

Well, I have said there was no justification for writing a life of Stratford Shakspeare. *Do you see any ?* How was it done ? Simply by taking the literature and saying, "*The author writes this, that, and the other, and therefore he must have been so-and-so.*" Quite right ; but it disposes of Shakspeare of Stratford. The life and attributes of the author, as inferred from the literature, are precisely those of Bacon, and ridiculously unlike those of Shakspeare. But Stratfordians prefer imagining a miraculous monster to accepting the existence of an actual being. Instead of a tradition which naturally fades, we have the accretions of imagination and unfounded assertions continually added to it, backed by the vested interests of the *amour propre* of mistaken scholarship, and, I may add, of the railway companies and hotel-keepers, who would suffer enormous losses by the overthrow of the popular idol in his local habitation and name. Rather than be made to look like fools, Stratfordian protagonists prefer to be—something else.

The excuse may be pleaded that the belief in witchcraft died hard, and that some of the finest intellects—notably Sir Thomas More—held to it. *Macbeth*, in my judgment, furnishes a concrete example of Bacon's methods in endeavouring to destroy injurious superstitions without defeating his purpose by arousing all-

powerful opposition. The witches in that play are, besides being mischievous, intrinsically objects of ridicule; but James I. had written a book upholding the reality of witchcraft, and frightfully severe laws had been passed in consequence. *Macbeth*, however, appeared for the first time in the Folio of 1623.

The fact—already more than once adverted to, and, indeed, reference to it must often recur—that moral character has become a factor in this investigation, imposes an immense obstacle to the lover of truth. Many Stratfordians are so possessed by fanaticism that they lie freely, and in such a way as to involve self-exposure. They garble extracts, suppress parts of sentences, metaphorically stamp and rave that they “will not” have it so, and abuse in the most reckless manner those who counter their prejudices and predilections. We have just seen that certain of their greatest authorities did not stick at forgery.

THE "LIVES OF SHAKESPEARE."

How can the Cambridge editors and other great scholars—scholarship depending upon exactness—tolerate such a "Life" of "Shakespeare" as that by Sir Sidney Lee? It is a tissue of "doubtlesses," "probabilities," "improbabilities," conjectures, and assumptions, and does not add one fact to the eight or ten which were all that were known before he wrote, and still comprise all that is proven.

The quagmire of contradictions in which the "Life" concocters inevitably involve themselves reminds one of the proverb concerning the desirability of a good memory for persons addicted to inaccuracy! As illustrating Sir Sidney's unreliability, I remark that he states that Shakspeare in his will devised "the tenement in Chapel Street to his daughter Judith." He left no tenement to Judith. He left £50 to her on condition she abandoned her right to a tenement in the Manor of Ravington. Then he asserts that Shakspeare left the Henley Street house to his sister Joan. He did not. He left the two houses in Henley Street to his daughter Susanna (Mrs. Hall), and he left the house in Chapel Lane to Joan for life, at a yearly rental of twelve pence. One would suppose that such an "authority" and "man of letters" as Sidney Lee would take the trouble to read his hero's Will.

Lee says: "There is evidence in the Stratford archives that Shakspeare's father could write with facility." Quite untrue. Shakspeare's father only makes a mark for his signature.

In his article in the "Dictionary of National

Biography," Lee says, "but however well Shakspeare's mother was provided for she was only able, *like her husband*, to make her mark in lieu of signing her name." In the same article he says: "When attesting documents he made his mark, and there is no evidence that he could write." To summarise Sir Sidney at this point—

(1) There is evidence that Shakspeare's father could write with facility.

(2) There is evidence that he could not write.

Sir Sidney genially enquires, "Why should the Baconian theorists have any following outside a lunatic asylum? They should be classed with the believers in Orton and the Cock Lane Ghost. Ignorance, vanity, inability to test evidence, *lack of scholarly habits of mind* (Heaven absolve us!) are the main causes predisposing half-educated members of the public" (like, say, Lord Penzance, Hallam, Oliver Wendel Holmes, Jas. Russell Lowell, Sir Edwin Arnold, W. E. Gladstone, who said: 'Considering what Bacon was I have always regarded the discussion as perfectly serious and to be respected,' and the great crowd of the most cultivated persons of this epoch) to the acceptance of the delusion; and when any of the genuinely deluded victims have been narrowly examined, they have invariably exhibited a tendency to monomania." I suppose Lee has the particulars of these examinations? Alas, poor Delia Bacon and Churton Collins!

Lee's statements as to the law of copyright, and the legal power of dramatic authors and acting companies who purchased plays to obtain protection and to restrict publication, are a muddle of contradictions. He says: "Shakspeare stood vigorously by his rights in all his business relations." He then gives instances of stopping the publication of certain other authors' plays. He

complains of the piracy of some of the "Shakspere" plays, and admits that eight or ten inferior plays by other writers were published under "Shakespeare's" name.

Yet Shakspere neither protected "his own" nor restrained the publication of the forgeries. How could this stickler for his business rights, who we know from the Stratford archives sued a friend for two shillings, and pursued a surety for six pounds, show such utter indifference to all questions of ownership of his own literary masterpieces?

What a contrast to Bacon's nature. In the State Papers it is recorded in correspondence between Chamberlain and Carlton that Bacon, as Attorney-General, disclaimed accepting any fees for services rendered to his *alma mater*—Cambridge.

How is it that there is not one instance of connection between Shakespeare or the actor and the Stationers' Register? Nothing was ever registered in that name, nor is it possible to trace the connection of the actual writer with the various persons who effected the registration.

Shakspere never in his own person claimed the authorship of one line of the productions known as those of Shakespeare. Just imagine, here is a "young man from the country," bursting with genius, with "probably *Venus and Adonis* in his pocket," as some "authority" suggests, comes to town to get a livelihood, is not even heard of for five years, and then proceeds to allow to be acted, or published anonymously, these marvellous productions of his; and nineteen of the "plays" made their first appearance without any writer's name. A more insane hypothesis was never conceived.

Had Shakspere written the plays, every means to make it known would have been adopted. If Bacon wrote them, every means to conceal the fact.

Judgment on Shakespeare is familiar in Pope's couplet :—

“For gain not glory winged his roving flight,
And grew immortal in his own despite.”

Why accept Pope's “wisest, brightest, meanest (using meanest in its common acceptation of despicable) of mankind” in relation to BACON, and yet refuse to accept his dictum in relation to “SHAKESPEARE”?

You cannot have it both ways. *If Shakspeare was the author it would be true.* If Bacon was the AUTHOR it is senseless. But Stratfordians don't like it !

Lee also says, “The poet's mother was buried in the parish church”—nobody knows where. He debarred his wife from his own grave, although she expressed a desire to be buried beside her husband.

Then, as to Shakspeare's own handwriting. Is there positive proof that he could write at all? His five signatures hardly prove it. There is certainly a generic similarity about them which, I think, excludes the idea that a law clerk wrote them. Something, too, must be allowed for the cramped space available on the parchment tags of the purchase and mortgage deeds. But the signatures suggest a laborious and slavish “painting” of strokes to a pattern. A page of such caligraphy is well-nigh inconceivable. Mr. Israel Gollancz states in his preface to “The Tempest” that “Shakespeare's own copy with his autograph is in the British Museum.” This is untrue ; I do not know why he says it.

Sir Sidney says, “Transcripts were made by the playhouse scriveners for prompt copies and the original manuscripts destroyed, *when the dramatist wrote so illegibly as Shakespeare.*” The observation is very natural, but, still, as a matter of fact, he knows no more on that point than anybody else, myself included.

Of course, the non-existence of any specimen of the

actor's handwriting (except the five or six signatures) is an overwhelming obstacle to the Stratfordian faith. All sorts of ingenious theories have been set up to account for it. The fire at the Globe theatre is one of the most specious, but that is inconsistent with the first appearance of fifteen plays many years after that event.

The supposed signature recently unearthed by Dr. Wallace at the Record Office is very disputable. Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence has most usefully reproduced in *facsimile* the page of the answers to interrogatories in that book of his, "Bacon Is Shakespeare," which contains so many other most costly and valuable reproductions. This alleged signature does appear to be written by the lawyer's clerk who drew up the context, and that the name is not spelt in full, but only abbreviated, suggests that the real attestation depends upon a large dot beneath it.

As to the matter of the "discovery" in its relation to Shakspeare, it is just what might have been expected. The man was living in his proper rank of life and amongst his equals, small tradespeople—hairdressers, as it happens to be at this period. One most curious point is that these people with whom he was lodging on a visit to town from Stratford, lived in Silver Street. Ben Jonson, in his "Staple of News," says: "Silver Street was a good seat for a usurer." Could any neighbourhood have been more appropriate for a man of Shakspeare's latter profession?

I would ask Stratfordians in their calmer moments (or judicial mood, if they ever find themselves in that case), *is it more difficult to suppose that Shakspeare was not the author of the writings ascribed to him than to account for the fact that there is nothing in his recorded or traditional life which in any way connects them with the man?*

Dr. W. F. Collier, in his "History of English

Literature," devotes a thoroughly characteristic chapter to "William Shakspeare," as he spells him. It contains the unwarranted and, indeed, outrageously unsupported statement that "acting, writing, and managing, Shakspeare lived among the fine London folks, honoured with the special notice of his Queen, and associating every day with the noblest and wittiest Englishmen of that brilliant time, yet never snapping the link which bound him to the sweet banks of Avon," &c.

It is morally reprehensible that any man who believes his utterances will be respected on account of his own personality should write such nonsense as this. It is as certain as anything can be that the third-rate actor did *not* live with the fine folks, was not honoured with any notice whatever by Queen Elizabeth, and did not associate at any time (to say nothing of "every day") with any noble Englishman. There is not the faintest trace of anything to justify Dr. Collier's assertions. It is quite impossible that, did they possess a modicum of truth, there would not be letters or some indications in the hands of third parties that it was so. It is positively pathetic to note the despairing efforts of the Stratfordians to rake up some evidence that Shakspeare was frequently present in performances before the Court. It is very probable that he was. Why not? He was a member of companies which did so appear. In the *Times* a few months ago the accounts of the expenses of such a performance were partly printed, and all the possible interest to be squeezed out of them was worked up into a long article. But, alas! they give no substance to the "Shakespeare" legend. But the more it could be proved that the actor appeared before the Court—*coincidentally with the fact that no notice was taken of him*—the worse for orthodoxy.

I have dealt perhaps sufficiently with this before, but Collier provides another means of securing truth on the Baconian principle that falsehood may sometimes

serve as an effectual bait for it. Dr. Collier forgets his chronology when he remarks that at 48 years Shakspeare "might have hoped to continue the noble series of Roman Plays, beginning with *Julius Cæsar* and *Coriolanus*." These plays only appeared when Shakspeare had been dead seven years. He certainly has the grace to admit later on that Shakspeare's life is "a dim, uncertain story." Then why does he previously commit himself to reckless and intrinsically absurd and impossible statements? He further observes: "The language of Shakspeare has been justly censured for its obscurity. It is full of new words in new senses." Precisely; it is only a profoundly learned scholar who could have invented them.

Dr. Raleigh, on "Shakspeare" (*sic*), in his recent "English Men of Letters" (Macmillan), has amusing passages. The work seems to have pleased some reviewers immensely. He is commended for his "sobriety and common sense" in "the best essay in English on the subject." He is supposed, however, to have found in the Sonnets many relative indications to the life of the actor! Strangely enough, the enthusiastic reviewer who ventilates this theory goes on to state that "Shakespeare has suffered from the general trend of modern criticism, that first constructs an ideal figure and then rejects any facts that do not suit the hypothesis."

Nothing could more precisely describe the Stratfordian method.

The hopelessness of the Stratfordian legend is indicated by Dean Beeching's methods of reply to Mr. George Greenwood's book, "The Shakespeare Problem Re-stated." The Dean is a trustee of the "birthplace."

The nature of these methods may be inferred from the following selection of expressions which Mr. Greenwood has felt bound to apply to passages from the book

in which the Dean professes to reply to Mr. Greenwood: "Preliminary aberrations from the path of accuracy." "An example of the economy of truth." "On the will the final signature is unmistakably 'speare,' whereas Malone, Madden, Spedding, Dr. Ingleby, and Dr. Furnivall, and many other high authorities, came to the opposite conclusion." "I have been inexcusably misrepresented." "Arguments are put into my mouth by Dean Beeching in order that he may have the satisfaction of replying to them." "He asserts that I have done so-and-so, though in truth and in fact I have, of course, done nothing of the kind." "Mr. Lee prints a facsimile of John Shakespeare's autograph. Mr. Lee does nothing of the kind." "It is difficult to write with patience of such an egregious perversion of the truth" (in connection with Shakespeare's going to school). "The judicious Dean only quotes a part of my passage." And, again, of something else: "It is a perfectly inexcusable misrepresentation on the part of my canonical" (now decanal) "censor"; and many pages more of the same sort. It is interesting thus to note the way in which even the most responsible Stratfordians behave when driven into a corner.

Here are some choice examples from Churton Collins and Sidney Lee. Lee says the suggestion that Bacon wrote the literature is a "foolish craze," "morbid psychology," "madhouse chatter." We are "suffering from epidemic disease, and unworthy of serious attention from any but professed students of intellectual aberration." This includes Lord Penzance, Lord Beaconsfield, Lord Palmerston, Judge Webb, Judge Holmes, Prince Bismarck, John Bright, and innumerable most thoughtful scholars eminent in many walks of life, and especially in the legal profession; those, in fact, who are most capable of weighing evidence, and who have taken most pains to collect it.

Churton Collins tried to outvie Lee in fury. He says: "It is only fit for the student of morbid psychology, and a ridiculous epidemic with many of the characteristics of the dancing mania of the middle ages." (These two great men do not seem to have a very varied vocabulary.) "The belief that Bacon wrote Shakespeare stands alone in its absurdity, *and absence of everything which could give any colour to that absurdity.*" "We have proof all but conclusive that Shakspeare read Greek and Latin in the original." That "Bacon was without a spark of genial humour." (Most intelligent people know that he wrote one of the best jest books in the language, and that *Jonson's criticism on him was that "he could with difficulty let pass any opportunity for a jest."*) Collins also remarks that, "What we ought to wonder at is how it came to pass that nature created a man whose intellect and genius are in their receptiveness, range, grasp, and versatility almost as miraculous as the suspension of natural laws." Also Baconians are "vain and ignorant," "given to impudent fictions," and "prodigiously ignorant of the rudiments of the literature." When offered the book of that great scholar, Dr. R. M. Theobald, Collins declined the gift because "this whole subject is so distasteful and repulsive to him that it would be a kindness not to send it to him."

When analysed, this impression of a personality "almost as miraculous as the suspension of natural laws" will be found to depend largely upon its attribution to Shakspeare the actor. If attributed to the proper person, Francis Bacon, it is marvellous, certainly, but it is not miraculous. Thus Collins and his congeners create their own "miracle."

Stratfordians actually use the fact that Miss Delia Bacon, who first started the question in America, died in a madhouse, *as an argument in support of their case.*

But Churton Collins came to an equally unhappy end soon after writing the foregoing, so Delia Bacon and he cancel one another.

Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote the preface to Miss Bacon's book, therefore insolence to her is insolence to him. Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander !

These exponents of truth adopt the process of the deaf adder "that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely " (Psa. lviii. 4, 5).

Then, for another specimen of the way in which the "Life" is made up, take Frank Harris's last, which is fantastic from cover to cover, except that he unconsciously does draw a most remarkably accurate portrait of the mind and characteristics—including the weaknesses—of Francis Bacon, calling him "Shakespeare."

By far the maddest book that has yet appeared in connection with the Stratford man is Frank Harris's "The Women of Shakespeare." There is not one iota of even presumptive evidence for any of the elements of this wildly imaginative concoction. It is sheer imagination that Shakspeare even ever heard of Mary Fitton, and yet the book is built up of statements which anyone knowing nothing of the matter would innocently take to be historical.

Day by day evidence is forthcoming that the leaders in the Press of the Stratfordian faith constitute a log-rolling fraternity, who maintain mutual admiration by dubbing themselves "men of letters." Directly they exhibit this label the rest of the world is expected to be struck dumb, and to "take it lying down"—a very suggestive expression !

To refer once more to Dean Beeching : "Mr. Greenwood tells us, quietly writes the Dean, that he (Jonson) was hoping that the secret of the true authorship would soon come out. Kind reader, Mr. Greenwood tells you

no such thing. It is pure canonical invention. Such is the gentle art of perversion as practised by a man of letters of the present day."

There is not the slightest degree of probability that Shakspeare of Stratford wrote the greatest literature in the world, and there is not one scrap of evidence that he ever claimed to have done so. He died absolutely unnoticed. Not a poem or elegy was written about him who must have enjoyed boundless honours with troops of friends, had he been regarded as the great poet and dramatist, and intimate with the Earls of Pembroke, Montgomery and Southampton. It was the fashion to write such elegies for every man who had made any literary mark. Thirty-two such panegyrics were written at Bacon's death. To these I refer later.

On Jonson's own death, among those, for instance, who praise him we have Chapman, Donne, Beaumont, Fletcher, Field, Selden, Waller, Herrick (says, "arch-poet Jonson"), Henry King, Habington, Shirley, Cartwright, Ford, and many others who write in Greek and Latin verse.

THE LIFE OF FRANCIS BACON.

Now contrast Shakspeare of Stratford's career with that of Francis Bacon. He was born in 1561, the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, the Lord Treasurer. His mother was one of the most learned women of her day. She read Greek fluently, and her translations are said to be faultless. She had a very strong character, Calvinistic and puritanical. Cecil's (Lord Burleigh's) wife was her sister, and so Francis's uncle. Burleigh had the power to confer appointments in the public service. Burleigh's letters to Francis exist wherein he deprecates "a waste of time over sonnets, plays and such frivolities." This indicates the suspicion of, at least, a tendency in his nephew. *From his earliest childhood Francis was a marvel of precocity.* When 10 years old Queen Elizabeth noticed him, and called him her young Lord Keeper. At 12 he went to Cambridge, and at 15 he asked to leave, as he "had learned all they could teach" him. It was his experience of the barrenness of the scholarship of that age which gave the first impulse to his new philosophy. He wrote at the time: "Our method of study must be wrong; might not a better be found?" Spedding, his biographer, says: "In him the gift of seeing a prophetic vision of what *might* be was united with the practical talent of devising means. He could at once imagine like a poet and execute like a clerk of the works."

In 1576 Francis and Anthony are enrolled as students in Gray's Inn. Francis was then 15. In 1577 Francis went in the suite of Sir Amyas Paulet, British Ambassador to the Court of France. There he had

the opportunity of acquiring French, Italian and Spanish. He is sent on a confidential mission by Paulet to Elizabeth and returns to France. He travels with the Court through the Provinces which are the scenes of 1 Henry VI. It is recorded that his conversation at this time excited the wonder of all who heard him, and there is a contemporary miniature by Hilliard around which was written in Latin, "If one could only paint his mind!" In 1579 he is still residing in France, settling mainly at Poitiers, but travelling to various European Courts to gather information about the characters and resources of their rulers. It is now *known* that he visited Italy, as Rev. Walter Begley discovered a book in Paris about seven years ago which proves it.

In February that year his father suddenly died, and through the non-signature of a will no provision was made for Francis, the youngest son. For several following years Francis does his utmost to live independently of the law and seeks a Government appointment. The Cecils refused it, and prevented his obtaining it from other quarters, spreading reports that he was a vain speculator, unfit for real business. Their hostility never ceased, and it was not until the death of Burleigh, in 1613, that he could obtain advancement to the office of Attorney-General. The jealousy of the Cecils was due to Burleigh's desiring that his own son should have the preference, for which he was unfit, and the acknowledged phenomenal abilities of Bacon. In *Hamlet* Bacon is believed to have revenged himself by the character of Polonius, which caricatures Burleigh. Francis was therefore forced—in his own words—"against the bent of his genius," to the law as a means of livelihood, and he resides at Gorhambury, St. Albans—the scene of the 2 *Henry VI.* The allusions are so intimate as to imply long familiarity with the locality. The play of *Cymbeline* is still more astonishing in its

local allusions to St. Albans. *No one who had not lived there could have known them.*

In 1581 he begins to keep terms in Gray's Inn.

In 1582 he is called to the Bar. As nothing is recorded of him, except that he was engaged in studies, it is believed that at this period he sketched several of the plays. It is believed that a play—*Hamlet*—was acted at Cambridge in 1585. If that was the play we know, and of which (parenthetically) John Bright said that “anyone who believed Shakspeare of Stratford wrote *Hamlet* or *Lear* is a fool,” it is certain that Shakspeare did not write it, for he could hardly have arrived in London. The very earliest date is some time in that year.

There are nine volumes of correspondence from Anthony and his Mother on family matters, and from all sorts of distinguished men connected with the Bacon's, now in the Lambeth Palace Library. One undated letter to Anthony bears the endorsement “from Burbage!” Much of this correspondence has not been read or deciphered.

Anthony Bacon had been abroad since 1579, and did not return until late in 1592, but the brothers constantly corresponded, and Anthony acted informally as purveyor of diplomatic information to the Foreign Office for something like a period of eleven years.

In 1584 Francis wrote a letter to Queen Elizabeth, full of remarkable advice, which she received graciously. His studies and occupations bring him no income, and he falls into debt.

This year also he enters Parliament as member for Melcombe in Dorset.

In 1586 he is made a Bencher of his Inn, but remains in such seclusion that it is invidiously commented on. This is the time when *The Taming of the Shrew*, the

Two Gentlemen of Verona and *Love's Labour's Lost* are first heard of, but the first very incomplete.

In 1587 Francis helps to get up an anonymous play—*The Tragedy of Arthur*. He also assists in masques to be performed before the Queen.

In 1588 he sits in Parliament for Liverpool. Still a briefless barrister, with any amount of free time.

From 1579, when he returned from France, at the age of 19, practically nothing appears until 1597, when he published his first volume of the "Essays," which consisted then of only ten. *Would so teeming a mind have produced nothing in these eighteen of the best years of his life?* This, of itself, is a suggestive argument of unanswerable force.

At the end of 1591 he writes an extraordinary letter to Lord Burleigh, extracts from which are given in Mrs. Pott's book:—

"I wax now somewhat ancient ; one-and-thirty years is a great deal of sand in a man's hour glass. My health, I thank God, I find confirmed ; and I do not fear that action shall impair it, because I account my ordinary course of study and meditation to be more painful than most parts of action are. I ever bear a mind (in some middle place that I could discharge) to serve her Majesty ; not as a man born under Sol, that loveth honour ; nor under Jupiter, that loveth business (*for the contemplative planet carrieth me away wholly*), but as a man born under an excellent Sovereign, that deserveth the dedication of every man's abilities. . . . Again, the meanness of my estate doth somewhat move me : for though I cannot accuse myself that I am either prodigal or slothful, yet my health is not to spend, nor my course to get. Lastly, *I confess that I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends* : for I have taken all knowledge to be my province. . . . This, whether it be curiosity or vainglory, or, if one take it favourably, *philanthropia*, is so fixed in my

mind that it cannot be removed. And I do easily see that place of any reasonable countenance doth bring commandment of more wits than his own; which is the thing I greatly affect. . . . And if your Lordship will not carry me on . . . this will I do: I will sell the inheritance that I have, and purchase some lease or quick revenue, or some office of gain that shall be executed by deputy, and so give over all care of service, and become some sorry bookmaker, or a true pioneer of that mine of truth which (Anaxagoras said) lay so deep."

Bacon divides his vacation between his mother's house at Gorhambury and Twickenham, where the Queen visits him, and where, on such an occasion, he records that he presents her Majesty with a *Sonnet*—"for she loves to be wooed, and to have Sonnets writ in her honour."

In this connection, too, I may fittingly read a letter written by Bacon to Sir Thomas Bodley in 1606, in which, although he had then been for some years employed in State business, he acknowledges himself unfit for it, and liable to many errors *from the pre-occupation of his mind*.

"I think no man may more truly say with the Psalm, '*Multum incola fuit anima mea*,' than myself. For I do confess, since I have been of any understanding, my mind hath in effect been absent from that I have done; and in absence are many errors which I do willingly acknowledge; and amongst the rest, this great one that led the rest: that, knowing myself by inward calling to be fitter to hold a book than to play a part, I have led my life in civil causes; for which I was not very fit by nature, and more unfit by the pre-occupation of my mind. Therefore, calling myself home, I have now for a time enjoyed myself, whereof likewise I desire to make the world partaker."

Bodley lectures Bacon in a letter brimful of learning, dated Feb. 19, 1607, about "his recent much too revolutionary writings," and counsels him to "learn from St. Paul, *Consectari meliora*, which course, would to God (to whisper so much in your ear) you had followed at first when you fell to the study of such writings as were not worthy of such a student." The nature of these writings we can gather from an earlier letter of Bodley's, December, 1577, in which, while sending £30 to his young (17) cousin Francis at Orleans, warns him "not to spend his spirits and the precise time of his travel in an infectious collection of base vices and fashions of men and women, or the general corruption of these times, which will be of use only among humorists for jests and table talk." In another letter he refers to "those toys which then occupied you."

In the thirty years between 1577 and 1607 we must, as inferred from many other indications, look for the busy time devoted by Bacon to his activity as "Shakespeare."

In his chapter on Francis Bacon, Collier says "in this respect—that his fancy was more vivid in age than in youth—the mind of Bacon formed an exception to the common rule; for, in general, the fancy of a young man grows less bright as his reason grows strong." There again the facts stare one in the face. Bacon, from youth to middle age, was practically non-existent, in a literary point of view. His fancy and brightness found expression in "Shakespeare," but those qualities had not quite evaporated when he began to pour out serious philosophical works at his maturity, and these were adorned with graces of which no one—as he had taken good care should be the case—had theretofore suspected him.

A very striking and convincing effect may be produced by holding up in one hand the whole of the books acknowledged by Bacon as his up to the age of

45. In 1599 the first volume of "Bacon's Essaies" was published, containing ten short essays, the "Colours of Good and Evil" and the "Sacra Meditationes" in Latin. The book is a duodecimo and contains about eighty pages.

Nothing more appeared until Bacon was 45 years old. His mother, Lady Ann Bacon, writes to his brother Anthony:—

"Verily, I think your brother's weak stomach to digest hath been much caused and confirmed by untimely goings to bed, and then musing—I know not what—when he should sleep."

Francis's Secretary and Chaplain's description of his habits may be read in the light of Sonnet No. 27. His Secretary states that he composed in the night and dictated to his amanuensis in the morning:—

Sonnet No. 27:—

"Weary with toil I haste me to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired :
But then begins a journey in my head
To work my mind when body's work's expired :
For then my thoughts (from far where I abide)
Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,
And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see,
Save that my soul's imaginary sight
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,
Which like a jewel hung in ghastly night
Makes black day beauteous, and her old face new.
Lo, thus by day my limbs, by night my mind,
For thee and for myself do quick find."

The above may be read without any strain of fancy as an apostrophe to his own Muse.

But my present point is that it is a foolish idea that so gigantic, fertile, cultured and original an intellect could have been quiescent and non-productive during

so long an interval as is marked merely by the works published in his own name, and during which period he was known to have been incessantly occupied so much in seclusion as to have evoked the remonstrances and wonderment of his friends. This is another piece of negative evidence which practically amounts to a positive demonstration.

THE SONNETS.

I will now deal with those unique 154 verses which appeared in 1609 as "SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS, never before Imprinted." They have always been a puzzle to students, and still remain so. More unwholesome nonsense has been written about them than any human compositions. Their language and ideas are like nothing else that was ever written. For profundity, subtlety, ingenuity, mystery, ambiguity, and charm they stand alone. All sorts of minds have read different meanings into them, but it is not certain that anyone has correctly divined their author's meanings. They were evidently written at different times. They are the cause of one of the scanty contemporary allusions to "Shakespeare," that of MERES, who is thus made a mooring of the Stratfordians amidst the flowing tide of common sense which threatens to sweep them away. Meres speaks of the "honey-tongued Shakespeare and his sug'rd Sonnets among his private friends." There is nothing whatever in the whole of Meres's reference to indicate that he had any personal acquaintance with the author. It is equally clear from the wording that he never saw the Sonnets himself. He was not one of the private friends. His allusion is hearsay gossip. The Sonnets were circulating in manuscript, and are supposed to have been mainly written in 1591. How many of them or all, it is, not possible to know. Stratfordians spin a cobweb of absurdities out of them, and believe that they are

autobiographical of the actor. There is not even a plausible point in support of this. It is wholly and absolutely absurd and impossible. The only thing certain about them is that they emanate from a highly cultivated mind, and from a person whose whole associations were of the most aristocratic character—who was familiar with Court life, was himself of high birth, and to whom the masses were personally offensive as “the mutable rank-scented many.” To suppose that they were written by the obscure actor and former butcher’s apprentice is infatuation bordering upon lunacy.

By far the most striking and probable interpretation of the Sonnets has been thought out by Mr. George James, of Edgbaston, in his pamphlet published in 1900. His arguments are strung together, enforced by long quotations, and it is useless to attempt to condense them here. But his theory is that the Sonnets are Bacon’s apotheosis of learning, knowledge, and *his hidden work, the plays. That is of his own Muse.*

There is another instance in English literature where the strain of passionate love is applied to learning. In 1593, Fletcher published a volume, “*Licia, or Poems of Love.*” This book contains 52 Sonnets, all conceived in the language of passionate affection and extravagant praise. And yet the author in his address to the reader says, “If thou muse what my Licia is, take her to be some Diana, at the least chaste, or some Minerva. No Venus fairer far. It may be she is Learning’s Image or some heavenly wonder which the precisest may not mistake; perhaps under that name I have shadowed discipline.” This is infinitely more reasonable than theories about “dark ladies” and unnatural affections. My own impression is that the Sonnets are irrepressible outbursts of mental exaltation from an intensely cultivated intellect. That they are largely addressed to an

eidolon of inner consciousness, and in some verses have no real objective meaning, but are a mere joy of language.

I most earnestly commend to the notice of any reader of this book the exquisitely written and most fascinating pamphlet, "Francis Bacon in the Sonnets," by Mr. James. Mr. James has written a series of seven pamphlets dealing with the plays and poems, and to my mind, they are the deepest and broadest and most temperate publications on the subject extant. But I would pledge my judgment that every one who reads that on the Sonnets will feel that it is a revelation.

One more example of this apotheosising an abstraction is the Song of Solomon, which the Church has chosen to adapt as addressed to herself in a corporeal capacity. That also contains an unmistakably "dark lady!"

Verse 5: "I am black but comely."

Verse 6: "Look not upon me because I am swarthy.
They made me keeper of the vineyards; but
mine own vineyard have I not kept," etc.

Here is an analogy comically complete.

In the Sonnets the word "weed" is used in a special connection. No. 76 contains the line—

"And keep invention in a noted weed."

Bacon's Prayer, it will be remembered, contains the sentence—

"I have, though in a despised weed, procured the good of all men."

Weed meant a garment which disguised the wearer.

Bacon, in *Henry VII.*:—"This fellow . . . clad himself like a hermit, and in that weed wandered about the country until he was discovered and taken."

And Juliet asks Lucetta to "fit her with such weeds as may beseeem a page."

This is the clearest possible circumstantial proof of the identity of the writer of the Prayer, Plays and Poems.

A "noted" weed—the plays which by themselves had attained great vogue, but disguised the author. A "despised" weed—a disguise which was not in itself an object of respect, but was of despicable or disreputable associations. A despised weed adopted for procuring the good of mankind, because in such a disguise it was easier to approach and mingle with the people, and to instil the wisdom and moral lessons desirable as not coming from a preacher or one professing to be higher than the masses to be taught.

Could anything be more exquisitely appropriate than the lines of Jacques in *As You Like It* (Act II., Scene vii.) :—

"Invest me in my motley, give me leave
To speak my mind, and I will, through and through,
Cleanse the foul body of the infected world,
If they will patiently receive my medicine."

And the ridicule of duelling put into the mouth of Touchstone probably helped to crush the practice ten times more than solemn preachments. Bacon denounced duelling with extreme severity and imposed heavy penalties. Unquestionably, he created Touchstone to further its suppression.

Thus to God and Man Bacon confesses that he has used a "weed" to conceal his personality.

In a letter to Father Fulgentio, a learned Jesuit at Venice (who was duly hanged and burned for being in advance of his epoch), Bacon writes :—

"'Tis my desire that you should know the views I have in the works whereon my thoughts are bent ; not

with any hopes of perfecting, but *thro' a spirit of attempting and serving after ages, which may be riper for these matters.*"

It is indeed remarkable that the plays are fresh to each succeeding generation, and that

"Age doth not wither nor custom
Stale their infinite variety."

In this very effort I am now making I am myself half-unconsciously fulfilling the great purpose and prophecy of this truly inspired being. He saw in his mind's eye that, whilst what he had written and perfected in his library was largely in advance of and unsuited to his own generation, generations to come would begin to understand and appreciate, and would ultimately unlock the treasure-house and possess themselves of all it contained stored up for their benefit.

The Sonnets throughout emphasize the perception that literature would outlast any merely material structure.

In the Hermit's speech *Bacon* writes :—"The gardens of the Muses keep the privileges of the golden age ; they ever flourish and are in league with Time. *The monuments of wit survive the monuments of power ; the verses of a poet endure without a syllable lost, while States and Empires pass many periods.*"

There is Sonnet 55, with its well-known commencing lines :—

"Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall out-live this powerful rhyme."

The remainder of this Sonnet is absolutely compatible with an apostrophe to an imagined personification of the Shakespeare plays.

Bacon in his "Advancement of Learning," as in so much of his prose writings, seems to give the text of his dramatic and poetic sermons thus :—

"The images of men's wits and knowledges remain in books exempted from the wrong of time and capable of perpetual renovation. Neither are they fitly to be called images because *they generate still and cast their seeds in the minds of others*, provoking and causing infinite actions and opinions in succeeding ages." In his Essay "Of Parents and Children" he says :—"The perpetuity of generation is common to beasts; but memory, merit and noble works are proper to man, and the noblest works and foundations have proceeded *from childless men who have sought to express the images of their minds* where those of their bodies have failed. So the care of posterity is most in them that have no posterity."

Bacon, in presenting a copy of the "Novum Organum" to Cambridge University, speaks of it as "*the birth I am lately delivered of*," and Sonnet 77 reflects this meaning in the lines—

"The vacant leaves thy mind's imprint will bear."

And—

*"Commit to these waste blanks and thou shalt find
Those children nurs'd, delivered from thy brain."*

This is tantamount to an express indication that what are called the "generative" Sonnets were addressed to an imagined personification of KNOWLEDGE.

So much for the Sonnets as apposite to Stratford !

To resume "the Life of Bacon." Between 1588 and 1593, appeared *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and other plays reflecting special local knowledge; some of the local details may have come from Anthony in Italy, although the recently ascertained fact that Francis also travelled there disposes of the necessity of Anthony as a channel of this information.

In 1592 Francis's intimacy with Essex culminated.

Anthony returns, and the brothers live together in chambers at Gray's Inn. They become secretaries to Essex, although he never paid them, but eventually Essex influenced the gift of a strip of land at Twickenham to Francis. Francis becomes desperately hard up and is found borrowing such small sums as £1. Later he is thrown into a sponging house by a Jew money-lender. Anthony mortgages his property and raises money from friends and pays the debt. *The Merchant of Venice*, with its Shylock and Antonio, appears soon after.

In 1592-3 Francis composes a device or play, *A Conference of Pleasure*. This was found in the Northumberland cover. One of the speeches in this play closely resembles Cranmer's speech in *Henry VIII.*, as well as certain of the Sonnets.

Whenever a masque or play was wanted by the Benchers of Gray's Inn, Bacon was always turned to to write it. It is the same thing as if, in our time—say, Sir Edward Clarke, or other eminent lawyer, was regarded as the standing dramatist and poet.

Beaumont admittedly collaborated with Bacon in writing and "setting forth" the masque, performed in Gray's Inn 14 February, 1612—13, to celebrate the marriage of the Count Palatine. They were well acquainted with each other. Beaumont belonged to the Inner Temple. There it is in the records. Chamberlain, writing on the 18th February, 1612—13, says "it came to Gray's Inn and the Inner Temple's turn to come with their masque, whereof Sir Francis Bacon was the chief contriver." The masque, with all particulars of scenery, dresses and stage arrangements, is in the collected plays of Beaumont and Fletcher.

It is also pretty apparent that Bacon took some share with Fletcher in composing "The Two Noble Kinsmen," which for some years circulated as by Shakespeare.

In 1593 *Venus and Adonis* is published anonymously, but with a dedication (signed "William Shakespeare") to Francis Bacon's young and intimate friend, the Earl of Southampton. It is described in this dedication as "the first heire of my invention," although ten plays had been composed between 1589—1593.

Venus and Adonis could not have been published without a special license owing to what might be deemed its licentious character. If Shakspeare wrote it, the difficulty of obtaining the license would have been insuperable. But it was enrolled on the Stationers' Register under the special authority of Archbishop Whitgift, who had been Bacon's tutor at Trinity, Cambridge, and was always his friend. Whitgift was otherwise extremely severe in regard to questionable books and closed the Register against Hall's "Satires," Marlowe's "Ovid," and several other books of the same class.

The possibility of a common player in that age being on such terms as to dare to dedicate his writings to a great nobleman is inconceivable. There is not a scrap of evidence that Shakspeare of Stratford had any acquaintance with Lord Southampton or Lord Pembroke. The most rabid Stratfordian cannot even invent any. But, as will be hereafter adverted to, it is possible that a sum of money did pass into the actor's hands from Lord Southampton, acting as an intermediary and as Bacon's friend. Meantime, the Stratfordians profess to believe that Shakspeare had so risen in the social scale that he felt himself privileged to ask one of the highest young noblemen in the land, whom in the Sonnets they believe the author addressed as "my rose" and "dear, my love," to find a wife without delay; or, as he puts it in the tenth Sonnet, "make thee another self for love of me!" *Is comment necessary?* And, as regards Lord Pembroke, it is demonstrated that Shakspeare was unknown to him, by the fact that in 1635 Cuthbert Burbage, son

of Shakspeare's associate, who first built playhouses, in petitioning the Earl, who was then Lord Chamberlain, speaks of "these deserving men"—Shakspeare, Hemmings, Condell, Phillips, and others, partners in the profits of that they call the House, of which the petitioners were lessees. *The Earl was the survivor of "The Incomparable Pair," to whom the Folio of 1623 had been dedicated only twelve years before this petition.* It is too ridiculous to suppose that had the Earl known the actor to be the real author of the Folio, a petition addressed to him would have described Shakspeare merely as a "man-player" and "deserving man." *This incident alone cuts the ground from under the Stratfordians, for it goes to the very heart of the matter,* Lord Pembroke being one of the two names immortalised by the dedication of the Immortal Folio, it is indisputably evident that the actor had enjoyed no special reputation amongst his fellows, *and that the idea of any personal acquaintance between him and the Lord Chamberlain never entered the minds of any of the parties concerned.*

In 1595 the plague broke out in London, and Bacon retreats to Twickenham with some congenial friends. There he employed a band of scriveners, or writers, pretty constantly, and a letter exists in which he asks for some "good pens" (writers), "as he has work for them." There is an entry in Bacon's "Promus," to which I am about to refer, "The Law at Twickenham for the Merry Tales."

Now we come to one of the most astonishing of all the indications of authorship. In the British Museum is to be seen a MS. of Bacon's called

"THE PROMUS OF FORMULARIES AND ELEGANCIES," dated December 5, 1594. This is Bacon's private note-

book in which he jotted down a number of phrases and turns of speech which seem to have struck or occurred to him over a period of four years.

Mrs. Pott undertook a great labour when she deciphered these, for the spelling and the several languages constituted much difficulty. In her great—in more senses than one—book she gives the results and traces many hundreds of quotations from this private note-book of Bacon's in the plays of "Shakespeare." Most of these expressions had never appeared in literature before; Bacon made a scarcely traceable use of them in his known writings, but there they are in the plays. No supporter of Stratford William has ever condescended to attempt to explain this colossal coincidence. All that the Stratfordians have been able to do is pick holes in some of Mrs. Pott's "Coincidences," and, to some very limited extent, prove that it is possible she has been too comprehensive in her selections, and included some which may have been used by previous writers. Judge Willis, in his "Baconian Mint," worked very hard at this, but with little striking success. There is an enormous residuum which cannot be explained away, and leaves only two alternatives: either Shakspeare used Bacon's private note-book or Bacon wrote "Shakespeare"!

Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence has greatly advantaged the cause of truth by reprinting the whole of the "Promus"—but without tracing quotations in the plays—in his "Bacon is Shakespeare."

Here are a few examples of identity between "Promus" entries and the plays, but, by making any selection, one runs a certain risk that the Stratfordians will say there are no more. They are innumerable, and Mrs. Pott's volume contains 605 pages and 1,655 instances, besides others in an appendix:—

From Shake-speare.

"One fire drives out one fire ;
one nail one nail."—*Coriolanus*
IV. vii.

"Happy man be his dole."—
Merry Wives III. iv.

"Of sufferance comes ease."
—2 *Henry IV.* V. iv.

"Call me not fool till heaven
hath sent me fortune."—*As*
You Like It II. vii.

"Thou bear'st thy heavy
riches but a journey."—
Measure for Measure III. i.

"Frost itself as actively doth
burn."—*Hamlet* III. iv.

"Deceive more slyly than
Ulysses could."—3 *Henry VI.*
III. ii.

From Bacon's "Promus."

"To drive out a nail with a
nail."

"Happy man, happy dole."

"Of sufferance cometh ease."

"God sendeth fortune to
fools."

"Riches the baggage of
virtue."

Frigus adurit (frost burns).

"Ulysses sly in speech."

N.B.—Shakespeare always alludes to Ulysses as sly, but in Bacon's prose works he is only once thus spoken of, namely, in this "Promus" entry, which seems to have been made expressly for dramatic use.

From Shakespeare.

"Give sorrow leave awhile to
tutor me."—*Richard II.* IV. i.

"I'll devil-porter it no
further."—*Macbeth* II. iii.

"The inaudible and noiseless
foot of time."—*All's Well* V.
iii.

"Your bait of falsehood takes
this carp of truth."—*Hamlet*
I. ii.

"The strings of life began
to crack."—*Lear* V. iii.

"The world on wheels."—
Two Gentlemen of Verona III. i.

"Thought is free."—*Tempest*
III. ii.

"There golden sleep doth
reign."

"Thou art uproused by some
distemperature."—*Romeo and*
Juliet II. iii.

From Bacon's Promus.

"Our sorrows are our school-
masters."

"He is the devil's porter who
does more than what is re-
quired of him."

"The gods have woollen
feet."

"Tell a lie to know a truth."

"At length the string cracks."

"The world was on wheels."

"Thought is free."

"Golden sleep."

"Uprouse."

From Shakespeare.

"A giving hand, though foul, shall have fair play."—*Love's Labour's Lost* IV. i.

"Beggars cannot choose."—*Taming of the Shrew* (Induction).

"As if increase of appetite had grown by what it fed on."—*Hamlet* I. ii.

From Bacon's Promus.

"Food is wholesome which comes from a dirty hand."

"Beggars should be no choosers."

"If you eat, appetite will come."

Large numbers of Promus entries are absolutely identical with expressions in the plays, such as "Pride will have a fall," &c., but I refrain from quoting them because we have long regarded many of them as proverbs, and believe that they were proverbs in Bacon's time. *But they were not so.* He noted them in the Promus as novelties. It is Shakespeare who has made them "household words" to ourselves.

Mrs. Pott makes the following computations:—English proverbs in the Promus, 203; reproduced in the plays, 152; French, Italian and Spanish proverbs in the Promus, 240; reproduced in the plays, 150; Latin proverbs in the Promus, 225; reproduced in the plays, 218. "It may be broadly asserted that the English, French, Italian, Spanish and Latin proverbs, which are not noted in the Promus and quoted in Shakespeare, are not found in other literature of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries" (Preface to Bacon's Promus, p. 84).

It may also be worth while to give one or two of the rare examples of parallelisms between Bacon's prose works and Shakespeare.

From Shakespeare.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."

"And we must take the current when it serves, or lose our ventures."—*Julius Caesar* IV. iii.

From Bacon.

"In the third place, I set down reputation, because of the peremptory tides and currents it hath, which, if they be not taken in their due time, are seldom recovered."—*Advancement of Learning*.

From Shakespeare.

"To thine own self be true.
And it must follow, as the
night the day. Thou canst not
then be false to any man."—
Hamlet I. iii.

"That strain again, it had a
dying fall. O, it came o'er my
ear like the sweet South, that
breathes upon a bank of violets,
stealing and giving odour."—
Twelfth Night I. i.

"That majestical roof fretted
with golden fire."—*Hamlet* II.
ii.

"I am never weary when I
hear sweet music. The reason
is, your spirits are attentive."
—*Merchant of Venice* V. i.

"Let him be his own carver."
—*Richard II.* II. iii.

"Nothing almost sees mir-
acles but misery."—*King Lear*
II. ii.

From Bacon.

"Be so true to thyself as thou
be not false to others."—*Essay
of Wisdom.*

"The breath of flowers comes
and goes like the warbling of
music."—*Essay of Gardens.*

"For if that great work-
master had been of a human
disposition he would have cast
the stars unto some pleasant
and beautiful works, like the
frets in the roofs of houses."—
Advancement of Learning.

"Some noises help sleep, as
soft singing; the cause is, they
move in the spirit a gentle
attention."

"You shall not be your own
carver."—*Advancement of
Learning.*

"Certainly, if miracles be the
control over nature, they appear
most in adversity."—*Essay of
Adversity.*

And so on; for dozens of pages in Edwin Reed's
"Bacon v. Shakspeare," and Harold Bayley's "The
Shakespeare Symphony," and other painstaking collec-
tions which, if the general public read them, would lay
this controversy to rest for ever. All this is mere
common-place to those who have studied the question.

As regards Bacon's Essays, many of them may be
regarded as the kernels of the plays. The foregoing
examples are to the point. Alexander Smith says:
"Bacon seems to have written the Essays with the pen
of Shakespeare."

The slip-slop style in which "authorities" write in
this connection is amusingly illustrated by a remark of
Sidney Lee's in a recent article in the *Quarterly Review*:

"Golding's English translation of Ovid's 'Metamorphoses' was universally accessible during Shakspeare's boyhood and manhood." Naturally, if accessible in his boyhood it would not have become inaccessible in his manhood! In this way is imaginary history written. Sir Sidney Lee proceeds to say that Golding's phraseology reappears so frequently in Shakespeare "as almost to compel the conviction that Shakspeare knew much of Golding's book by heart."

Yet, when precisely the same kind of evidence is furnished by hundreds of instances from Bacon's "Promus" and other works, it amounts to nothing in the opinion of this classical Stratfordian "authority." And, again, what Jonson says of Shakspeare is gospel, but what he says of Bacon is not worthy of notice.

And next we come to the broad fact which also cannot be explained except by Bacon's authorship. The "Shakespeare," we all of us know, is the thirty-six plays contained in the First Folio. That was published in 1623. It professes to be a collection of Shakespeare's plays made by Hemminge and Condell, two fellow-actors. Shakspeare had been dead seven years. Hemminge and Condell sign a Preface, but it is not disputed by Stratfordians that this Preface was written by Ben Jonson. Ben Jonson also wrote the sarcastic verse facing the alleged portrait of the Stratford man, which certainly does not enhance one's ideas of his mentality. Jonson very significantly says, "Look not upon his picture but his booke!" About 1620 Bacon requested Jonson to go and reside with him at Gorhambury, and assist him in turning into Latin those scientific works, the "*Novum Organum*" and the "*De Augmentis Scientiarum*," &c., upon which alone Bacon cared to rest his fame.

The verse *must* be sarcastic because no human being could derive pleasure from looking at the mask-like hideous face, and bust with arms turned different ways.

He decided that Latin would be the safest storehouse of his wisdom for posterity.

If carefully collated, it is not difficult to fit Bacon's occupations and experiences with the dates of those plays which were known before the Folio of 1623 made its appearance.

Mrs. Pott has largely demonstrated this in her "Thirty-two Reasons why Francis Bacon Wrote Shakespeare."

The known incidents and experiences of Bacon's life do largely correspond with the dates of the production of the plays. Thus, Bacon's mother began to show symptoms of insanity in 1600, and from that date to her death, in 1610, nothing is known of her except for one remark of Bishop Goodman's at the Court of James: "Bacon's mother was little better than frantic in her age." About this period, the plays assume a melancholy tone, and *Lea*r deals with the phenomena of madness, as does also the re-written *Hamlet*. But it was the time when Shakspeare had finally acquired wealth, bought New Place, and was extremely prosperous, as he remained to the end of his life.

Dr. Sir James Crichton Browne recently furnished a characteristic specimen of the effect of a popular belief, when, in a speech as chairman of a dinner at a club to celebrate Shakspeare's birth, he remarked, "All our modern discoveries in brain functions give proof of the fidelity of Shakespeare's etchings of madness." "No doubt the poet made observation of the demented beings that crossed his path, and gathered in with precision all kinds of impressions."

Bacon unavoidably had to study those conditions in his mother during a period of eight or nine years. But Dr. Browne prefers to imagine a crowd of demented beings as haunting his Stratford puppet to account for his special knowledge on this subject.

So it is with all of the Stratfordian shrine makers. Shakspeare "doubtless" was a lawyer's clerk, to account for his knowledge of law. He was "doubtless" a schoolmaster for awhile, to account for his classical learning. They invent as they go along. Messrs. Lee, Collins and Co. have a mortal objection to the inductive method. Francis's fame is smothered by the very process he came into the world to destroy. Those who are now "foremost in the files of Time," and *who have no axe to grind*, have abandoned it. There is no extremity of absurdity or wild imagining to which "Shakespearean" scholars, as exemplified by Sidney Lee, will not resort to back up their fetish. Collins's statement, that he was certainly able to read Greek, is the only useful contribution made by him to the cause of truth, for it renders the Stratford claim preposterous.

What is the argument of the Stratfordians? *One word—"GENIUS."* *Genius cannot fire a gun without ammunition.* Then they mention Robert Burns. It is childish. Burns was a genius, but he only worked with the materials—dialect and personal experiences—in his own sphere. Genius cannot give technical knowledge. Genius cannot give the acquirements resulting from education without the education. Since the Day of Pentecost it has not gifted illiterate persons with the power of speaking languages of which they had never before heard. Lowell says in "Among My Books": "the range and accuracy of the author of 'Shakespeare' are beyond precedent or later parallel."

A very amusing suggestion is made by Professor A. R. Wallace when the knowledge of Court life and manners revealed in the plays is quoted as militating against the Stratfordian authorship. Professor Wallace says: "transcendent genius is sufficient to remove all such difficulties. Shakspeare lived near the lordly castles

of Warwick and Kenilworth, and at times of festivity such castles would be accessible through the friendship of servants or retainers ; thus it may be that Shakspeare acquired some portion of that knowledge of the manners and speech of nobles and kings which appears in the plays."

Again the zeal of the Stratfordians outstrips discretion. Even genius then needed the educational aid of the keyhole and back-stairs ! Mr. George Hookham well says : "I cannot think that people realise to what a level it is necessary to degrade the first of poets before he can be identified with Shakspeare of Stratford."

But we have already seen that according to Dr. Collier the young man was not confined to the kitchen, but associated upstairs "with the fine folks, &c." What promotion ! And to be the lover of a Maid of Honour too !

One sees how naturally Bacon, who had "fallen," was poor and his career ended, would look round and be willing that a collection of his unacknowledged works should be made so that there should be in existence, apart by themselves, only that for which he was really responsible. *This involved a winnowing process.* So we find that twelve plays which had up to then borne the fashionable and marketable name of "Shakespeare" are not put in that collection. The fact that the name was used for "spurious" plays without fear of interference is further moral proof that it was only a *nom de plume*. But eight plays appear in the First Folio which had never been heard of before, and ten others had never previously been published. Amongst them are such masterpieces as *Macbeth*, *Twelfth Night*, *Julius Cæsar*, and *Othello*. *Othello* was first published in 1622 (Shakspeare dead six years), and then altered in the Folio, 1623. *Hamlet* appears re-written with many hundreds of new lines. Almost all

the plays previously known were revised. Who did this work? Who *could* have done it except Bacon by the hand of Jonson? Jonson, if he had not known the great secret before, must have learned all about it soon after his arrival at Gorhambury in 1620, and therefore, we find a total reversal of all that he had previously said about "Shakespeare."

Instead of "poet-ape" and thief of the reversion of old plays, etc., he is apostrophised as "soul of the age," etc. Yes, but *whom* was he apostrophising? Obviously, the person who figured as "Shakespeare." He says of "Shakespeare" that he had equalled "all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome sent forth." Ten years later he publishes a book of reminiscences of all the great men he had known, and then he applies these exact words to Bacon. He says of Bacon's works that "they are to be preferred either to insolent Greece or haughty Rome." This is not a coincidence—it is an express declaration. *And in that same list of great men Shakespeare's name is not mentioned*, but Bacon stands first. He calls Bacon "the mark and acme of our language."

It will be asked, Why did not Bacon own the authorship? I have already given very strong indications in connection with the Cecils' hostility. His enforced ambition for the Chancellorship—the Woolsack—the hatred of his mother for associations with the theatre (her almost agonised letters on this subject exist)—the evil name attaching to a class known as "rogues and vagabonds" and liable to heavy penalties unless enlisted in the service of important personages or functionaries, such as the Lord Chamberlain—are quite sufficient to account for it. He would have ruined his career had he been identified as a playwright. When he had lost his position he was still less willing to be identified with these "*works of his recreation*," for he actually uses this

expression when writing to Sir Tobie Matthew, to whom he was in the habit of submitting most of his productions. *There are no such works except they be the "Shakespeare" literature.* Sir Thomas Bodley is reported to have said that he "would not admit such rifferaff as plays into the library he had founded at Oxford."

In this correspondence with Matthew, most of which is undated, or the dates erased, direct allusions are made by the names to the plays *Julius Cæsar* and *Measure for Measure*, and Bacon refers to "putting the alphabet in a frame," which, fitting in with one of his maxims, "Tragedy and comedy are made of the same alphabet," may be quite naturally taken to mean that the Folio of 1623 was in course of compilation. I somewhat amplify this in the chapter on "Minute Indications."

In 1609 the records of Bacon's *official* work are unusually scanty, but his literary correspondence with Sir Tobie, who was then in exile on account of his joining the Romish Church, is unusually large. Matthew refers to Bacon's scientific and historical works, mentioning the names, and Bacon makes mysterious allusions to "those writings which I sent you," "that little work of my recreation," "the alphabet," "those writings," "the other writings," etc. In December he laments to Sir Tobie: "The death of your good friend and mine, A. B. . . . I think myself a most unfortunate man to be deprived of two of those friends whom I accounted as *no stage friends, but private friends* (and such as with whom I might *freely and safely communicate*)—him by death, you by absence."

Quoting Mr. George James: "But Bacon had a positive as well as a negative reason for not publishing the Plays and Poems in his own name. He showed profound sagacity in arranging a *nom-de-plume* by which they should pass as the composition of an actor. In

the Sonnets the poet-philosopher insists that by this policy the reforming and teaching spirit of the Plays is freed from the cramping thralldom of pomp and state, and that the teaching will be received from the mouths of clowns, fools, and despised players that men would reject from philosopher or reformer."

Sir Philip Sydney says: "Hard-hearted men who would despise the austere admonitions of the philosopher, yet would be content to be delighted, which is all the Goodfellow Poet seems to promise, and so steal to see the form of goodness, which seen, they cannot but love, ere themselves be aware, as if they took a medicine of cherries."

One enormously strong argument, in my judgment, is that *Bacon never once mentions Shakspeare*. But Bacon wrote ardently in favour of the stage as an educative medium, and deplored its degradation, and that there were no dramatists capable of rising to its opportunities. He writes: "Dramatic poesy is history made visible . . . typical history . . . narrative or heroical poesy . . . truly noble, and has a special relation to the dignity of human nature; dramatic poesy, which has the theatre for its world, would be of excellent use if well directed," etc.

It is inconceivable that when the star of Shakespeare, the greatest poetic dramatist of all time, arose, Bacon should not have thought it worth even a reference!

But we find the name "William Shakespeare," "Shak," "Sh," "Shakespeare," "Willi," "William," scribbled upon the Northumberland cover of Francis Bacon's writings by an amanuensis. This is the only known instance in which the names of Francis Bacon and "William Shakespeare" are brought together CONTEMPORANEOUSLY. What *could* have induced Bacon's penman to try his pen by using the name of "Shakespeare" and playing upon "Willi" without a

prefixed capital, "Sh," "Shak," etc.? Here is an opening for the Stratfordian imagination!

Mr. T. le Marchant Douse has identified the handwriting on the Northumberland Cover as that of JOHN DAVIES, of Hereford. He was a scholar of Oxford University. He wrote a Sonnet:—

"TO THE ROYALL INGENIOUS AND ALL LEARNED KNIGHT,
SIR FRANCIS BACON

(Davies was a professional scrivener and teacher of handwriting).

"Thy bounty and the Beauty of thy Witt,
Comprised in Lists of Law and learned Arts,
Each making thee for great employment fitt
Which now thou hast (though short of thy deserts),
Compels my pen to let fall shining Inke
And to bedew the Baies that deck thy Front
And to thy health in Helicon to drinke
As to her Bellamour the Muse is wont:
For thou dost her embozom; and, dost use
Her company for sport twixt grave affaires:
So utterest Law the liuelyer through thy Muse.
And for that all thy Notes are sweetest Aires,
My Muse thus notes thy worth in ev'ry Line
With yncke which thus she *sugers*; so, to shine."

I have only to add that Davies was one of Bacon's "good pens." Here we have the same allusion to "sugar" used by Meres about the Sonnets.

Amongst many other things on that cover which has been reproduced by photogravure in Edwin Reed's book (unfortunately long out of print and unobtainable, but I possess a copy) is the word "HONORIFICABILITUDINO." This is a contraction of "HONORIFICABILITUDINITATIBUS" in *Love's Labour's Lost*.

Bacon says in one of his Essays (XLVII.):—"In choice of instruments it is better to choose men of a plainer sort. . . . Use also such persons as affect the business wherein they are employed, for that quickeneth

much." This is a sufficient answer to the Stratfordian objection that such a prodigious author-genius as Bacon would not have used so ignorant a person as Shakspere the actor for his counterfeit representative.

Bacon, writing to his friend, Dr. Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester, regarding his Essays, says:—"But I account the use that a man should seek of the publishing of his own writings before his death to be but an untimely anticipation of that which is proper to follow a man, and not go along with him." Whoever else among great and ambitious men held this strange doctrine of literary reserve?

The "Shakespeare" literature added many thousands of words to the English language. It is said that Milton only used 7,000 words. At the age of 34 Bacon appeared for the first time, pleading in the King's Bench. We know the impression he made, for a young lawyer of Gray's Inn, who was present, wrote an account to Anthony Bacon. This letter says that a marked feature of the new pleader was "the unusual words wherewith he had spangled his speech." Some sentences were almost too obscure for the capacity of his hearers, and the young lawyer ends his letter facetiously by remarking that, "if it please Her Majesty to add deeds to words the Bacon may be too hard for the Cook."

Here Bacon exhibits in his own person the enormous vocabulary and unique words which distinguish the plays. Many were never used before, nor have been since, but all are invented in a strictly scholastic manner.

Harold Bayley, in his "Shakespeare Symphony," p. 209, gives a list of the new words by which various authors have enriched the English language. Bacon figures for 1,850 words, "Shakespeare" for 9,450!

It was a maxim of Bacon's that "Writings should

be such as should make men in love with the lessons and not with the teachers."

In the "De Augmentis" (VII. i.) he writes: "For myself I may truly say that, in this present work and those I intend to publish hereafter, I often and advisedly throw aside the dignity of my name and wit (if such thing be) in my endeavour to advance human interest; and, being one that should properly, perhaps, be an architect in philosophy and the sciences, I turn common labourer, hodman, anything that is wanted; taking upon myself the burden and execution of many things which must needs be done, and which others, from an inborn pride, shrink from and decline."

One of the most obvious absurdities of the Stratford defenders is that they all write and speak as if Bacon had been born an old man! They judge his style from his grave philosophical writings towards the close of his life. He had many styles, as George Saintsbury and everyone else with real acquaintance with the subject is well aware of. I have already referred to this in relation to the play of *Richard II.* His versatility has no known parallel. Bacon, as a young man, was vivacious, and endowed with what is euphemistically known as "the artistic temperament" in a high degree. He would then have thoroughly enjoyed writing *Venus and Adonis*!

Reed says "he had a distinct reputation among his contemporaries to meet men on their own ground and to converse with them in the special dialects to which they were accustomed in their pursuits." His writings are full of homely provincialisms, such as, "money is like muck, not good except it be spread"; "if you leave your staddles too thick you will never have clean underbrush," &c.

Francis Osborn says: "I have heard him entertain a country lord in the proper terms relating to hawks and dogs, and at another time outcant a London surgeon."

Mallett's "Life of Bacon" contains the passage:

"In conversation he could assume the most different characters, and speak the language proper to each, with a facility that was perfectly natural—a happy versatility of genius which all men wish to arrive at, but which one or two only in an age are seen to possess."

Sir Tobie Matthew writes of Francis: "*Of incomparable abilities of mind, of a sharp and cutting apprehension, large and fruitful memory, plentiful and sprouting invention, deep and solid judgment, a man so rare in knowledge of so many several kinds, endued with the facility and felicity of expressing it all in so elegant, significant, so abundant and yet so choice and ravishing a way of words, of metaphor, and allusion as perhaps the world hath not seen since it was a world.*"

His conversation is described as such that "all that heard him had only one fear—that he would make an end."

Sir Tobie Matthew also, in a letter dated April 9th, 1623, adds this startling postscript, "The most prodigious wit that ever I knew of my nation and of this side of the sea is of your Lordship's name, though he be known by another."

Bacon writes to Matthew about 1622, in which he says, referring to some past transaction, that his memory may be at fault, "My head being then wholly employed about invention." The word invention was then a term of art appropriated to Poetry and the Drama. Bacon remarks in his "Cogitata et Visa" that "the art of inventing grows by invention itself."

Bacon's chaplain, Dr. Rawley, in his short Life of Francis, says of him that "abilities which commonly go singly in other men in him were conjoined—sharpness of wit, memory, judgment, and elocution, together with extraordinary celerity in writing, facility in inventing, and caution in venting the imagination or fancy of his brain."

Ben Jonson writes of Bacon, "I have and do reverence him for the greatness that was only proper to himself, in that he seemed to me ever by his work, one of the greatest men, and most worthy of admiration that had been in many ages."

The infatuation which possesses people who have had the leisure and claim for themselves the brains to discern the truth of questions which present some superficial difficulties in continuing to support the authorship of Shakspeare, of Stratford, is phenomenal. Profound scholarship is not needed for the elucidation of truth in this controversy. All that is needed is common sense and common honesty. Your "men of letters" are committed to the other side and only use their acquirements for the purpose of obscuring the truth.

But what is the sense of sacrificing the reputation of an Englishman who on all hands is confessed to be of supreme intellect, unsurpassed attainments, absolutely original thought, insomuch that he has changed the whole course of intellectual processes, and of contemporary European and subsequently immortal fame, in favour of a common, ignorant, doubtfully educated, and almost certainly illiterate rustic, concerning whose character not one single favourable fact is known, most of the scanty facts that are known being base and discreditable?

POETRY.

ONE of the favourite Stratfordian arguments is that Bacon was incapable of writing poetry, and they mainly rely upon several selected verses of his, paraphrasing the Psalms :—

It is generally believed that Milton was a poet. The following are some specimens of his performances when he tried to tackle the Psalms :—

Psalm i., done into verse, 1653, concludes :—

“ For the Lord knows th’ upright way of the just,
And the way of bad men to ruin must.”

Psalm vii. :—

“ Then will I Jehovah’s praise
According to His justice raise,
And sing the Name and Deity
Of Jehovah the Most High.”

Psalm viii. :—

“ Fowl of the heavens and fish that through the wet
Sea paths in shoals do slide and know no dearth.
Oh, Jehovah our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is Thy Name through all the earth.”

Psalm lxxx. :—

“ Thou feed’st them with the bread of tears,
Their bread with tears they eat,
And mak’st them largely drink the tears
Wherewith their cheeks are wet.”

Most of these paraphrases are of the same high quality,

and I am sure many even more comical could be found ; these leap to the eyes at a glance.

His celebrated lines in "Il Penseroso"—

"Sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warbles his native wood notes wild"—

are quoted with delight by Stratfordians. Milton was born in 1608, being 8 years old when Shakspeare died. It is not possible for language to be more preposterously inappropriate than the foregoing : The "Shakespeare" literature is highly cultured ; its scenes are mainly of foreign location ; there is nothing "native," or suggestive of "wood notes," or "wild" about it. Yet the logrollers regard this as a beautiful emanation and testimonial.

If it were worth while to defend Bacon's reputation as a poet, apart from the "Shakespeare" productions, it would be possible to quote many examples of much merit, and one may say in excuse for both Milton and Bacon in the matter of the Psalms that they may have been influenced by a reverent fear of departing even a hair's-breadth from the original Holy Writ.

But I subjoin the following as a specimen of Bacon's paraphrase of a Psalm :—

PSALM cxxxvii.

"Whenas we sat all sad and desolate
By Babylon upon the river's side,
Eased from the tasks which in our captive state
We were enforced daily to abide,
Our harps we had brought with us to the field,
Some solace to our heavy souls to yield.

But soon we found we failed of our account ;
For when our mind some freedom did obtain,
Straightways the memory of Sion's Mount
Did cause afresh our wounds to bleed again,
So that with present griefs and future fears
Our eyes burst forth into a stream of tears.

As for our harps, since sorrow struck them dumb,
 We hang'd them on the willow trees were near ;
 Yet did our cruel masters to us come,
 Asking of us some Hebrew songs to hear,
 Taunting us rather in our misery,
 Than much delighting in our melody.

"Alas ! (said we) who can once force or frame
 His grievéd and oppresséd heart to sing
 The praises of Jehovah's glorious name,
 In banishment under a foreign king ?
 In Sion is His seat and dwelling-place,
 Thence doth He show the brightness of His face.

Jerusalem, where God His throne hath set,
 Shall any hour absent thee from my mind,
 Then let my right hand quite her skill forget,
 Then let my voice and words no passage find ;
 Nay, if I do not thee prefer in all
 That in the compass of my thoughts can fall.

Remember Thou, O Lord ! the cruel cry
 Of Edom's children, which did ring and sound,
 Inciting the Chaldeans' cruelty :
 ' Down with it, down with it, even unto the ground.'
 In that good day repay it unto them
 When Thou shalt visit Thy Jerusalem.

And thou, O Babylon, shalt have thy turn
 By just revenge, and happy shall he be
 That thy proud walls and towers shall waste and burn,
 And as thou didst by us so do by thee.
 Yea, happy he that takes thy children's bones,
 And dashes them against the pavement stones."

It seems to me that, if Milton had written that, even
 Milton need hardly be ashamed of it.

And here are two more lively specimens :—

BACON.

" In the beginning, with a mighty hand,
 He made the earth by counterpoise to stand,
 Never to move, but to be fixéd still ;
 Yet hath no pillars but His sacred will."

This last is a grand conception and a noble line. And now

MILTON.

“ But the just establish fast
 Since Thou art the God that tries
 Hearts and reins. On God is cast
 My defence, and in Him lies,
 In Him who, both just and wise,
 Saves th’ upright of heart at last.”

After this it is a very ludicrous idea that Milton, as a poet, can patronise Bacon. One might suppose that Milton had not read Shakespeare, but founded his judgment upon the acute and veracious Leonard Digges!

Whatever may have been Bacon’s poetic merit in paraphrasing the Psalms, there are very striking indications that we owe them in their prose state to him. Many experts are of opinion, from certain circumstances—which, however, I will not assert to constitute positive evidence—that Bacon fixed the style of the whole Bible as we possess it—that is, as the work of James the First’s translators. Many instances of alternative renderings of verses could be quoted, and it is inherently probable that Bacon, who had so much enriched the English language, was called into consultation in finally settling the text.

And here is a Sonnet by Bacon, which forms part of a fragment of a Masque written by him about the year 1594. This appeared in the *Westminster Gazette* recently, but, as usual, the orthodox protagonists ignored it.

“ Seated between the old world and the new,
 A land there is no other land may touch,
 3—Where reigns a queen in peace and honour true ;
 Stories or fable do describe no such.
 5—Never did Atlas such a burden bear,
 As she in holding up the world opprest ;

- 7—Supplying with her virtue everywhere
 Weakness of friends, errors of servants best.
 No nation breeds a warmer blood for war,
 10—And yet she calms them by her majesty ;
 No age hath ever wits refined so far,
 And yet she calms them by her policy :
 To her thy son must make his sacrifice
 14—If he will have the morning of his eyes.”

Mr. Samuel Waddington, himself a Sonneteer of no mean order, comments on the above :—

“ It has often been remarked what a difference there is between the styles adopted by Bacon in his various works and that of Shakespeare, but, if readers will compare the above Sonnet with the following lines, they will find that such difference is not always apparent :—

(1) “ Flying between the cold moon and the earth ” (first line of Sonnet).—*Midsummer Night's Dream*.

(2) “ In peace and honour rest you here, my sons ” (third line of Sonnet).—*Titus Andronicus*.

(3) “ Shall see thy virtue witnessed everywhere ” (seventh line of Sonnet).—*As You Like It*.

(4) “ That is not blinded by her majesty ” (tenth line of Sonnet).—*Love's Labour's Lost*.

(5) “ Ere I let fall the windows of mine eyes ” (fourteenth line of Sonnet).—*Richard III*.

(6) “ Thou art no Atlas for so great a weight ” (fifth line of Sonnet).—*Henry VI*.

It will be noticed that, with the exception of (2), the similarity of sound occurs in the same part of the line, “ between the old ” and “ between the cold,” occupy the third to sixth syllables, while “ by her Majesty ” and “ virtue everywhere ” are at the end of the line. The word “ Atlas ” in both instances occupies the fourth and fifth syllables, while “ the morning of his eyes ” and “ the windows of mine eyes ” form the concluding cadence.

The Sonnet was written before three of the plays above quoted. The ninth line, "No nation breeds a warmer blood for war," reminds one of the words, "That Island of England breeds very valiant creatures," in *Henry V.*, which is supposed to have been written in 1599, and therefore five years after the Sonnet.

But it is unnecessary to labour the fact that Bacon was a great poet.

On his death thirty-two elegies were published, which Dr. Rawley collected under the name of *Manes Verulamiani*. Twenty-seven speak of him as a transcendent poet. He is apostrophised as "the morning star of the Muses." "The tenth Muse and the glory of the Muses' choir." "Phœbus feared that Bacon should be king among the Muses." He is described as "a Muse more choice than the Nine"; as "Apollo, the master of our choir"; as "*the precious gem of hidden letters*." Another writer exclaims, "If thou wilt claim, O Bacon, all that thou hast given to the Muses, then love, the earth, the Muses, Jove's treasury, prayer, heaven, song, incense, grief, will become bankrupt." Nothing here about science, or law, but Bacon is mourned because he was the favourite object of the Muses' inspiration.

There is also a very suggestive lament: "Verulam found philosophy creeping on *low socks* (the footgear of comedy); he rose on a loftier cothurnus; and Aristotle, *alive again*, flourishes in the *Novum Organum*."

Macaulay says, "The poetic faculty was powerful in Bacon's mind."

Bulwer Lytton says of the "De Augmentis," that, "Poetry pervaded the thoughts, inspired the similes, and hymned in the majestic sentences of the wisest of mankind."

Shelley regarded Bacon as a great poet.

Edmund Waller in dedicating his poems to Queen

Henrietta Maria, writes:—"I might defend the attempt I have made upon poetry by the example of many wise and worthy persons of our own time, as Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Francis Bacon, Cardinal Perron, &c., but, Madam, these nightingales sang only in the spring; it was the diversion of their youth."

On the other hand, the Stratford man's high-water mark in poetry is the inscription on his tomb, his verses on "Lousy Lucy," and on his fellow local money-lender, John A'Combe (who was allied with him in attempting to enclose the common). Here they are.

An Epitaph on Tom-a-Combe, otherwise Thin-beard:—

"Thin in beard and thick in purse,
Never man beloved worse;
He went to the grave with many a curse,
The Devil and he had both one nurse."

[Whom I have drunke with.]

"Piping Petworth, dancing Marston,
Haunted Hillborough and hungry Grafton,
With dodging Exhall, Papist Wixford,
Beggary Broom and drunken Bidford."

It may be remembered that at Bidford the apple-tree was exhibited for a century or two under which Shakspeare was said to have slept after a drinking contest, in which he became too insensible to move.

Then there is the *Epitaph on John Combe* from the Ashmolean MSS., cited by Halliwell-Phillipps:—

"Ten in a hundred here lies engraved,
'Tis a hundred to ten his soul is not saved;
If any one asks, 'Who lies in this tomb?'
'Ho, ho,' quoth the Devil—'tis my John-a-Combe.'"

The following lampoon is said to have been the cause of his hasty flight to London:—

"A Parliament man and a Justice of Peace,
At Home a poor scarecrow, at London an ass;
If lousie is Lucy, as some volkes miscall it,

Then Lucy is lousie, whatever befall it.
 He thinks himself great, yet an ass is his state,
 We allow by his ears with asses to mate.
 If Lucy is lousie, as some volkes miscall it,
 Then Lucy is lousie, whatever befall it."

The Epitaph on his grave :—

"Good friend, for Jesus sake forbear
 To digg the dust enclosed heare ;
 Bleste be y^e man that spares thes stones,
 And curst be he that moves my bones."

Jonson, in his prefatory ode in the Folio, says:
 "Thou art a monument without a tombe." When we
 remember that the monument looks down upon the
 grave, and bears the inscription: "A Nestor in
 experienced judgment, a Socrates in philosophical
 genius, and a *Virgil in poetic art*," we see that Jonson
 spoke the truth. The monument relates to one man,
 the tomb to another.

It is refreshing, amidst such a sea of uncertainty, to
 find, in the above choice specimens of the Stratford
 man's Muse, a rock of assurance on which Stratfordians
 and Baconians can shelter—all parties being agreed as
 to the authorship of *these* productions.

LOVE.

IT is an article of the Stratfordian faith that Bacon could not have written the Plays because he wrote the Essay on "Love."

Mr. George Saintsbury, that shining literary light, shall give us a lead here. He remarks, in his "History of Elisabethan Literature," that, "Bacon was a strangely blended character, pusillanimity, lack of passion (let anyone read the Essay on 'Love,' and remember that some persons, not always inmates of lunatic asylums, have held that Bacon wrote the Plays of Shakespeare), his love of empty pomp and display, and so forth" (p. 209).

Here are further quotations, which, as a farrago of illuminative contradictions, cannot fail to be interesting:

"Even in the Essays and the 'Advancement of Learning,' the characteristics of style are by no means the same . . . but in studying them it might be desirable to add *Henry the Seventh*, which is a model of clear, historical narration . . . and though not exactly erudite, yet by no means wanting in erudition."

. . . "We have the genesis of the Essays in the *Promus of Elegancies*, the publication of which Mr. Spedding did not undertake for some reason or other, but is due to Mrs. Henry Pott. Here we have the quaint, but never merely quaint analogies, the apt quotations, the singular flashes of reflection and illustration which characterise Bacon, in their most unformed and newborn condition. In the Essays they are worked together."

That is not true. They are practically absent from

all his serious works, as I have stated. In the *Promus* we have the genesis of the Shakespeare Plays, but it is absolutely ludicrous to state that these jottings are found to an appreciable extent in the *Essays*.

"Here and there are passages in Montaigne which might almost be the work of a French Bacon. In both there is the same odd mixture of dignity and familiarity, the union of a rich fancy and a profound interest in ethical questions, a curious absence of passion and enthusiasm, a touch of Philistinism, which, in Bacon's case, contrasts most strangely with his frequently gorgeous language and the evident richness of his imagination, or at least his fancy."

"The scheme and manner of these *Essays* naturally induced a sententious and almost undeveloped manner of writing. The compression of them prevents the author from displaying his command of a consecutive, elaborated, and harmonised style. What command he had of that style may be found in the *Henry the Seventh*, *Atlantis*, and various minor works."

"Bacon is quite the equal of Jeremy Taylor in sudden flashes of as quaint but illuminative rhetoric, for, after all that has been said of Bacon, he was a rhetorician rather than a philosopher. He is stimulating beyond the recorded power of any other man except Socrates; he is inexhaustible in analogy and illustration, full of wise saws and of instances as well ancient as modern; but he is by no means an accurate expositor," etc.

"His constant practice in every kind of literary composition, and in the meditative thought which constant literary composition perhaps sometimes tempts its practitioners to dispense with, enabled him to write on a vast variety of subjects and in many different styles."

Could a more complete outfit for a great dramatist be better catalogued than in the above? The question of style, too, is well dealt with. The necessary "compres-

sion " quite accounts for the method of the Essay on " Love."

That Essay furnishes one of the strongest proofs that Bacon did write the plays. It is a condensation and crystallisation of common sense in relation to Love, which Bacon expands and develops in the Shakespeare dramas and poems. The examples which follow are more than my space should proportionately admit, but a pamphlet could be written on this point alone, and Dr. R. M. Theobald's long chapter in his " Shakespeare Studies in Baconian Light " would be found intensely interesting, even by anyone who feels no concern in the question of Shakespearean authorship.

Lord Tennyson's well-known utterance is another instance of the headstrong, thoughtless prejudice of a celebrated man. His son states in his biography that in reply to someone who asked him if he thought Bacon wrote the plays, he said: " I felt inclined to write back, ' Sir, don't be a fool.' " (He shows the usual Stratfordian courtesy !) The way in which Bacon speaks of love is enough to prove that he is not Shakespeare."

The whole tenor of the expressions connected with love, and the whole conduct of lovers throughout the plays, appear to have been written for the express purpose of justifying the Essay.

Parenthetically, I remark that a man who led the vulgar and impure life of which all the known facts convict Shakespeare is not, *primû facie*, likely to have conceived such beings as Imogen, Miranda, Cordelia, Juliet, Hero, and the long list of Shakespeare's gentlewomen. It is infinitely less likely than that Bacon should have done so. The habitual associations of an actor in Elizabeth's days must have been coarse and foul beyond our present powers of appreciation.

The Essay on " Love " is very short, and the most notable thing about it is *that the most ardent lover that*

ever lived would admit the truth of every word in his cooler moments.

Can any of the following be denied? "If love be predominant it is a weak passion, because it becomes an enfeebling influence." "It checks with business; it troubleth men's fortunes, and maketh men that they can no ways be true to their own ends." "Great spirits and great business do keep out this weak passion." "It is a strange thing to note the excess of this passion, and how it proves the nature and value of things by this—that the speaking in a perpetual hyperbole is comely in nothing but love." "Whosoever esteemeth too much of amorous affections quitteth both riches and wisdom." "Love is the child of folly. They do best who, if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarter, and sever it wholly from their serious affairs and actions of life."

Bacon is here writing not as an advocate, but purely as an observer and analyst. In his masque, "The Conference of Pleasure," he makes a discourse "in praise of the worthiest affection." (The title is on the Northumberland cover.) There is no space for full quotation, but he contrasts love with other "affections," such as fear, grief, and pity. He says: "All these endeavour to keep the main stock of nature and to preserve her from loss, but love is a pure gain and advancement in nature; it is not a good by comparison, but a true good; it is not an ease of pain, but a true purchase of pleasures. It springeth not out of ill, and is not intermixed with ill; it is not like the virtues which are hard taskmasters at first and after give an honourable hire, but the first aspect of love, and all that followeth, is gracious and pleasant."

Now as to love in the dramas. First, its use at all is notably restricted. Mr. T. W. White, among other critics, remarks, "Shakespeare is almost alone among

his contemporaries and successors in frequently rejecting love as the motive of his dramas."

Mr. White concludes that "he therefore had a weak animal development." This is a highly diverting contrast to Mr. Frank Harris's idea that he was an inordinate sensualist and worn-out sexual voluptuary. In the Essay Bacon also says: "Nuptial love maketh mankind, but wanton love corrupteth and embaseth it." Is this not true?

A few instances of "Shakespeare's" handling of love in the persons of his characters may be quoted, but there is no space for more. The subject is exhaustively dealt with by Dr. Theobald.

In the historical play—*Henry IV.*—Hotspur is so intent on business as to neglect his wife. Lady Percy asks:—

"O, my good lord,
For what offence have I this fortnight been
A banished woman from my Harry's bed?"

She says she has watched him asleep, and knows that

"Some heavy business hath my lord in hand,
And I must know it, else he loves me not."

After some not unaffectionate chaff he finally replies:

"Come, wilt thou see me ride?
And when I am o' horseback I will swear
I love thee infinitely. But
Whither I must, I must."

In *Henry V.* there is the charming wooing scene between the King and the French Princess, and the King says:—

"If thou canst love me for this, take me; if not, to say to thee
I shall die is true; but for thy love, by the Lord, no! Yet I love
thee too."

In this and all quotations I would refer the reader to

the whole context, which always make more evident that the operation and influence of love are accurately analysed in the Essay.

IN THE TRAGEDIES.

Troilus and Cressida—

Troilus : “ In all cupid’s pageant there is presented no monster. Nothing but our undertakings ; when we vow to weep seas, live in fire, eat rocks, tame tigers ; thinking it harder for our mistress to devise imposition enough than for us to undergo any difficulty imposed,” etc.

Here we have a satire upon lover’s habitual hyperbole.

Romeo and Juliet.—The play is a commentary upon Bacon’s aphorism, “ Love in life doth much mischief, sometimes like a Siren, sometimes like a Fury.” Friar Lawrence draws the moral—

“ These violent delights have violent ends,
And in their triumph die, like fire and powder,
Which as they kiss consume,
The sweetest honey
Is loathsome in its own deliciousness,” etc.

(In Act I. i., 184) :—

“ Oh heavy lightness, serious vanity !
Misshapen chaos of well seeming forms !
Feather of lead ! bright smoke ! cold fire ! sick health !
Still waking sleep, that is not what it is ! ”

Julius Cæsar.—Portia complains that Brutus carefully shuts her out from all share in his public life. It gives a striking example of the strife between love and business.

Antony and Cleopatra.—Dr. Theobald points out that about half the play might be quoted to illustrate the sentiments and cautions of the Essay.

Hamlet.—The love between Ophelia and Hamlet illustrates another phase of Bacon’s analysis : “ Frailty thy

name is woman." "Brief as woman's tears," "If thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them."

This is pretty conclusive.

Othello almost textually reproduces Bacon's Essay in his resolve not to allow his duty to the State to be interrupted by love (I. iii. 266).

THE COMEDIES.

Two Gentlemen of Verona.—Love is here represented as a source of weakness and folly:—

"To be in love, where scorn is bought with groans;
Coy looks with heart-sore sighs; one fading moment's mirth
With twenty watchful, weary, tedious nights;
If haply won, perhaps a hapless gain," etc., etc.

And,

"As the most forward bud
Is eaten by the canker ere it blow,
Even so by love, the young and tender wit
Is turned to folly."

Proteus remarks:—

"I leave myself, my friends, and all for love.
Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphosed me."

Merry Wives.—There is little genuine love in this Play, but Falstaff remarks after his amatory bouts: "I do begin to perceive that I am made an ass."

Measure for Measure has a pithy passage or two. The Duke says:—

"Believe not that the dribbling dart of love
Can pierce a complete bosom."—(I. iii. 1).

Bacon says: "It seems, though rarely, that love can find entrance, not only in our open heart, but in a heart well fortified, if watch be not well kept."

Much Ado.—Benedict says:—

"I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviour to love," etc., etc.

Love's Labour's Lost.—Biron is quite Baconian. He says :—

“ For your fair sakes have we neglected time,
 Play'd foul play with our oaths,
 Your beauty, ladies,
 Hath much deformed us, fashioning our humours
 Even to the opposed ends of our intents.”

Bacon says : “ Love, if it check with business, troubleth men's fortunes and maketh men that they can no ways be true to their own ends.”

Midsummer Night's Dream.—Bottom says to Titania : “ Reason and love keep little company nowadays ; the more the pity that some honest neighbours will not make them friends.”

Merchant of Venice contains delightful love scenes, but, to quote Dr. Theobald, “ Love is not the main or most attractive motive. Portia's choice in love is determined by lottery. Nerissa's is a shadow of Portia's. Jessica's is a runaway match in which there is much calculated self-seeking : her love makes her a rebellious and undutiful child, an apostate to her faith and a pilferer.” Here also

“ Love is blind, and lovers cannot see
 The pretty follies that themselves commit.”

—(II. vi. 36).

As You Like It.—Touchstone remarks : “ We that are true lovers run into strange capers, but as all is mortal in nature, so is all nature in love, mortal in folly.”

Rosalind admits :—

“ Thou speakest wiser than thou art 'ware of. Love is merely a madness.”

Rosalind describes her own behaviour when she was acting the part of a lover :—

“ At which time would I, being a moonish youth, grieve, be

effeminate, changeable, longing and liking, proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles. . . . Would now like him, now loathe him, then entertain him, then forswear him, now weep for him, then spit at him, that I drove my suitor from his mad humour of love to a living humour of madness."—(III. ii. 420).

All's Well and *Twelfth Night* contain illustrations, and in *The Winter's Tale* we have the most extreme exhibition of the reckless madness to which love gives rise in the conduct of Florizel when, in reply to his father's opposition, he exclaims: "From my succession wipe me, father, I am heir to my affection."

So, Bacon keenly remarks: "He that preferred Helena, quitted the gifts of Juno and Pallas."

Well, that ought to be enough to demonstrate the fact that Bacon and Shakespeare entertain the same ideas about love, and that Lord Tennyson's outburst and the "orthodox" conclusions are false and ridiculous.

LAW.

THE plays reveal such knowledge of law that the profoundest lawyers say that the author must have been a lawyer. Through all the writings it seems as if he could not get away from legal forms and allusions, some of them of the most abstruse character.

Amongst the most acute lawyers who have looked into the question of the authorship of "Shakespeare" is Mr. E. J. Castle, K.C. He has written a big book on the subject. The principal value of his conclusions consists in the absolute demonstration he gives that the literature is so saturated with law, and that of the most recondite character, that the author must have been a lawyer or had the assistance of a lawyer. He makes the remark, "Bacon's object was self—a luxurious life—personal distinction and above all money—not scandal. The last thing he would wish to be known as is a playwright, an object of contempt and hatred to thousands."

This erroneous view of Bacon's moral nature colours all Mr. Castle's conclusions, and, whilst he furnishes strong reasons for Bacon's concealment of the sole authorship of the plays, he yet indicates that Bacon undoubtedly collaborated in their production. He is amazed at the amount of the law in the plays, its deep and thorough character, and proves incontestably that no one could have written the plays who either did not possess such knowledge himself or could not have commanded it from one who did. In spite of the inexplicable difficulty of showing how the law could have been "worked into the very fabric" of the plays so as

to be "part of the material itself," he prefers to stick to the notion that Shakspeare wrote them.

It is obvious that, if Bacon wrote them, no difficulty in this respect exists, and Castle nowhere gives any reason for assuming that Bacon did not write them. He gives many instances of Bacon's activity in devising and stage-mounting masques, and yet would argue that so much knowledge of the technique of the stage is shown in the plays themselves that only a professional actor could have written them. There is no force in this. The more Bacon's life is studied, and the more circumstantial evidence is gathered relating to the blank periods of his life, the more does it become apparent that the theatre and everything appertaining to dramatic performances occupied his mind. This is undeniable as regards *Henry VIII*. Castle states that neither Shakspeare nor Jonson could have known anything about the procedure of a Lord Chancellor at the ceremony of opening a Legatine Ecclesiastical Court, and it is improbable that Bacon could have known it until he had become Chancellor. Yet we find it most accurately described in the plays. There are departures from Cavendish's history of the events which led up to the fall of Wolsey which indicate that Bacon substituted his own experience and feelings for the precise features of Wolsey's case, more especially in the celebrated "Farewell to Greatness" passage (see p. 246 in Castle's "Study of Bacon, Shakespeare and Jonson). From innumerable indications it is perfectly certain that Bacon wrote *Henry VIII*. The very ludicrous remark of Mr. Castle that *Henry VIII*. "shows the progress of Shakespeare's legal friend" practically gives away the whole case of authorship. It postulates the absolute certainty that there must have been such a friend, and, in view of the context of the play, makes the idea of collaboration absurd. It is a purely gratuitous suggestion without foundation.

Henry VIII. appeared for the first time in the Folio of 1623. Shakspeare dead seven years, and all Bacon's experiences connected with his "fall" passed and matured in his mind. Mr. Castle says, "Bacon had assisted Shakspeare some years before, but after he found his professional life closed he returned to his literary labours," *i.e.*, the revision of the plays. He adds, "*Henry VIII.* contains the special knowledge that Bacon alone would possess." All sheer imagination! Straws show the way of the wind.

The use of the word "scholars" by Wolsey in the play indicates a subtle knowledge of Canon law which would have been unattainable by Shakspeare.

Amongst other points Mr. Castle proves that the writer of *Hamlet* was able to read, and did read, law reports couched in Norman-French, Latin jargon, and Black-Letter type.

Then everyone knows Lord Campbell's dictum as to "Shakespeare's" knowledge of law. A volume might be written on the law exhibited in the plays, and above all in *the Poems*, where it would never have revealed itself had not the mind of a mighty genius proved capable of containing many subjects at the same time. It is admitted on all sides that whoever the author of the Sonnets might be, he was so familiar with law that he unconsciously reveals an inability to refrain from recondite legal expressions.

In the *Contemporary Review* of November, 1911, there is a remarkable article giving a minute analysis of "Shakespeare's knowledge of the law of marriage." It is extremely technical and deals principally with the validity and effects of verbal contracts and pre-contracts of marriage.

Shakespeare distinguishes between by "words of the present tense" and a contract to marry *per verba de futuro*." Falstaff says, "It is certain corporal that he

is married to Nell Quickly ; and certainly she did you wrong, for you were troth plight to her." The distinction between troth plight and marriage, *per verba de presenti*, goes to the very root of the difficulties that underlay the mediæval law of marriage.

Some of the extraordinary ideas of marriage prevalent in Elizabeth's times are exhibited in the last scene of *King Lear*.

In *Taming of the Shrew* other aspects are to be seen ; also in *Measure for Measure*. The author of this article, who is a Stratfordian, remarks : " The passage relating to Mariana's right to dower is of extreme interest, though *one cannot believe that Shakespeare made his quite correct statement of the law except by accident*" (the italics are mine). " The law itself was, one would think, too complicated and unusual for a layman to have known." The passage runs :

Duke : " For his possessions
 Although by confiscation they are ours
 We do instate and widow you withal
 To buy you a better husband."

A most learned exposition of the difficulties follows to the effect that up to the reign of Edward VI. the widow was not protected against escheat for felony or treason. But in 1549 it was settled by Statute that escheat in the case of felony did not affect the widow's dower. So Mariana would not have been entitled to dower unless the Duke had relinquished his rights.

" Shakespeare can hardly be taken to have known the law on this point, though he declares it correctly, and does so in spite of the fact that Angelo's offence was really *petit* treason and not high treason, since the duke was a feudal lord and not a king. This distinction Shakespeare could hardly have known."

" It is carrying the worship of Shakespeare too far to suppose that he was familiar with this particular

obscurity in the law of treason. On the other hand, the play teems with legal references and correct statements of law, and it is dangerous to dogmatise as to the extent of Shakespeare's legal knowledge, especially as we know that he was on more than one occasion a litigant." (A good many of us are often litigants without knowing the law.)

I make this long quotation, not because any ordinarily educated person is unaware that the Shakespeare literature is saturated with law, but as usefully illustrating the demoralising effect of fetish worship. Here is a first-class lawyer so given over to Shakespeareolatry that he crushes out his own good sense, and after proving that his idol could not have penned the knowledge attributed to him, still clings to his belief, and continues to adore the inanimate image !

This is more respectable, however, than attempting to prove that the law is so bad that Bacon could not have written the literature. Stratfordians, in this connection, provide an amusing dilemma for observers. If the law in Shakespeare is good, he is only right by accident. But if it is bad, Bacon could not have written it.

This reminds me of Mr. Andrew Lang's latest performances in the *Cornhill Magazine*. If Stratfordians can only affix an anachronism upon Bacon, they exceedingly rejoice. Mr. Lang says, he "does not begrudge the groundlings the knowledge that Aristotle lived before the Trojan war," in reference to *Troilus and Cressida*, and concludes that "the author, whoever he was, was no scholar."

That does not follow. As in one of Rembrandt's pictures the doctor attending the Virgin has a stop watch in his hand, I suppose we may pronounce that Rembrandt is not a great painter ! In all such compositions something conventional, artificial or imaginary,

may be designedly introduced, or may appear from carelessness. Mr. Lang commences that article in the orthodox Stratfordian manner, by calling all advocates of the Baconian authorship "distraught," "quarter educated," &c., and their arguments "the audacity of ignorance"; whilst he sneers at John Bright, Palmerston, Whittier, Mark Twain, and others, calling them "sturdy intelligences." He has the grace to admit that "from documents of the period we know very little about Shakespeare," and also that the "Lives" by Halliwell-Phillipps and Sidney Lee are "such stuff as dreams are made of." Thus do these "men of letters" disagree.

Mr. Lang proceeds to say: "We are not absolutely sure of the identity of Shakespeare's father, nor of his wife." Also, "Hemminge and Condell believed that in the papers 'received *from Shakespeare*'" (deads even years!) "they had his own manuscripts." But he has previously stated that these could only have been "fair copies." So Hemminge and Condell could not have known Shakespeare's handwriting! I can well believe *that*.

When Jonson made a record in his "Discoveries," which does not suit Mr. Lang, he says (in the article referred to): "Ben's memory had become untrustworthy!" Characteristic! He also makes the double-edged observation: "The sceptics, like other sceptics, are easily credulous of improbabilities when it suits them to believe." If this is not audacity, it is at least a very courageous utterance for a Stratfordian protagonist!

To sum up the question of authorship under the heading of law, Stratfordians hold that it is more probable that Shakspeare had a very extensive knowledge of it than that Bacon should not have been omniscient!

MINUTE INDICATIONS OF AUTHORSHIP.

IN some cases, the very minuteness of a fact constitutes its conclusive character. I give in this chapter many examples, but they might be indefinitely extended.

Thus, in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Proteus says Valentine had taken ship to Milan. In those days there was a waterway between the towns, which has ceased to exist for ages. No one would be likely to have known this who had not visited the spot.

This applies also to the allusion in *The Merchant of Venice*: "The Tranect, or common ferry, which trades to Venice." "Tranect" is a corruption of *traject*, from the Italian "traghetto." It would hardly be known to anyone who had not visited North Italy.

In the *Winter's Tale*, Gulio Romano is mentioned enthusiastically as the sculptor of the statue of Hermione at Mantua. He was well known as a *painter*; but Shakespeare makes him a *sculptor*. Eminent Stratfordians exult in what they believe to be a discovery of the dramatist's ignorance here. And it is often of vital importance to the Stratfordian theory that ignorance should be proved. It turns out, however, that this is a proof that the author must have visited Mantua, for the two epitaphs on Romano's tomb, in the Church of St. Barnabas there, celebrate him for three arts—painting, architecture, and *sculpture*! So "Shakespeare" is right! It is Mr. Andrew Lang and the *Saturday Review* who characterise this reference to Romano as one of Shakespeare's blunders.

I have already commented on the fact that although the plays exhibit nearly all extant contemporary know-

ledge, it is a great argument of the Stratfordians that because they contain a few anachronisms they cannot be by Bacon.

It is therefore held to be more probable that Shakspeare knew nearly everything than that Bacon should not have been infallible.

Mr. Greenwood, in his book (pages 116, 117) makes some extremely interesting remarks upon Shakespeare's familiar knowledge of the Isola di Rialto, as distinguished from the "Rialto, where merchants most do congregate," and of the villas (such as "Belmont") along the Brenta.

The circulation of the blood was discovered by Harvey in 1619—three years after Shakespeare's death. *Coriolanus*—one of the plays never even heard of until its appearance in the 1623 Folio—contains the following remarkable passage :—

"There was a time when all the body's members
Rebell'd against the belly ; thus accused it :—
That only like a gulf it did remain
I' the midst of the body, idle and inactive.

The belly answered.

True is it, my incorporate friends, quoth he,
That I receive the general food at first
Which you do live upon ; and fit it is
Because I am the storehouse and the shop
Of the whole body : but, if you do remember,
I send it through the rivers of your blood,
Even to the court, the heart,—to the seat o' the brain ;
And through the cranks and offices of man,
The strongest nerves and small inferior veins
From me receive that natural competency
Whereby they live," &c., &c.

This is a much stronger proof that the play was written subsequent to Harvey's discovery than all the "doubtlesses" of the Stratfordians.

One more very curious and startling example has been detected by Mr. Harold Bayley, as follows :—

Shakespeare.

"Sense sure you have, else
could you not have motion."

Bacon.

"Some of the ancient philo-
sophers could not conceive
how there can be voluntary
motion without sense."

Bacon's passage is from the "Advancement of Learning," but he subsequently discovered that the theory that everything that has motion has likewise sense was untenable, *and in the 1623 edition of the same book*, he expressly declares that it is untrue. The quotation from Shakespeare is from the 1604 Quarto of *Hamlet*. In the Folio of 1623 *the passage in question, no longer harmonising with Bacon's views, was omitted.*

The remainder of Mr. Bayley's remarks under his chapter of "Coincidences" cannot be explained away by any sane and fair-minded being. That chapter alone settles the whole question.

A curious literary indication is in *Henry VI. I. vi.* :—

"Thy promises are like Adonis' gardens
That one day bloomed and fruitful were the next."

Commentators were long puzzled by this, but the passage has now been identified in Plato's "*Phædrus*," a work which had not been translated in Shakespeare's time.

In *Othello*, Act III., Sc. iii., Othello says :—

"Never, Iago;
Like to the Pontic sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontis and the Hellespont,
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love."

This is, perhaps, the most remarkable of all the examples of minute indications and local knowledge.

The use of the word "icy" is, in itself, a proof of such inner technical knowledge as could only have been acquired by one acquainted with practical navigators of the Black Sea and the Hellespont. Venice was the headquarters of such trading-ships. If the geographical phenomenon—no ebb tide and the coldness of the current—were known scholastically, it could only have been taught in Padua or other universities of north Italy; yet here we have a "Shakespearean" character using it quite casually as an illustration of a passing mental mood. Can any educated person believe that such a phenomenon could have been known to the Stratford actor? If the "men of letters" answer affirmatively they indicate contempt for the intelligence of everybody outside their own little mutual admiration coterie. I deem myself too intelligent to believe that *they* believe it.

Othello was first published in 1622 (six years after Shakspeare's death), but was considerably revised before its inclusion in the 1623 Folio. Who but the AUTHOR would have thought it worth while to add 160 lines and to revise this play? Or, indeed, to revise any of them?

In the *Tempest* the knowledge of navigation and management of a vessel in difficulties are precisely correct, and such as an able captain would put in practice. There are the same seafaring terms in Bacon's treatise "On the Sailing of Ships" published in 1611.

It is highly improbable that Shakspeare *ever* saw the sea.

In the *Tempest* we see distilled into poetry Bacon's later studies of "Heat and Cold," "History of the Winds," the "Ebb and Flow of the Sea," "The Sailing of Ships," "Dense and Rare," the "Versions of Bodies," the "Biform Figure of Nature" (Ariel and Caliban), the "Sensitive Soul," and of "An Airy and Flamy Nature."

In 1610 Bacon was a fellow-member, with the Earls of Southampton and Montgomery, in the Virginia Company, which sent a fleet to the West Indies. The fleet encountered exceptional storms, and the ship *Admiral* was wrecked in the Bermudas. In 1611 we have the expression in the *Tempest*, "the still vexed Bermoothes."

William Strachey sailed for Virginia in the *Sea Venture* May 15th, 1609. He subscribed £25 to the Virginia Company. The *Sea Venture* was wrecked in the Bermudas in July, 1609, "during the great storm." Strachey wrote an account of it to a lady of rank in England in a letter dated July 15th, 1610. It was not published until fifteen years later, in "Purchas his Pilgrimes," 1625. In 1618 Strachey attempted to interest Bacon in his "History." The account of the adventures was sent to the Virginia trustees during the summer of 1610. I believe that Strachey was a distant connection of Bacon. A copy of the adventures, made in 1618, and *inscribed to Bacon*, is in the British Museum (Sloane MSS., No. 1,642).

Sidney Lee "thinks that Shakespeare probably composed the *Tempest* last." It is first published in the Folio of 1623.

The best bibliography of the Quartos and Folios is the expensive and elaborate work by Alfred Pollard, April 5th, 1909 (Methuen). Pollard flatly contradicts Lee on all his theories as to the construction and issue of the first Folio, and is extremely severe on him. These doctors bitterly disagree.

Sir Sidney Lee has written an introduction to the facsimile Folio and says, "Shakespeare cannot be credited with personal responsibility for the issue of any of the quarto editions of his Plays." Why not? But, then, how impossible it is that seven years after his death he should be concerned in the form in which the plays appeared in the Folio. Where were the

manuscripts? Lee says that a syndicate consisting of the Jaggards and others were responsible. He holds that the original MSS. were destroyed by the manager of the theatre. There is not the faintest evidence to this effect. He says, "Five members of the publishing fraternity must be regarded as this syndicate." He admits that Hemminge and Condell merely signed the Dedication and Address "To the great variety of readers" "in accordance with custom." He proceeds, "Obvious as are the signs in the first Folio of the syndicate's direct indebtedness to many of the quartos" (he has previously said that the "copy" was largely obtained from MSS. under the control of Hemminge and Condell), "the first Folio projectors abstained from open acknowledgment of obligation to any versions of Shakespeare's plays that were previously accessible in print." Naturally, as the real AUTHOR supervised the whole. Why were Hemminge and Condell invited to sign the Address if it were a syndicate of publishers who were responsible? Why not have stated it frankly? Because Hemminge and Condell were called in as a blind. The object was to give colour to the idea that the printers worked exclusively from Shakespeare's undefiled autograph.

Sir Sidney goes on to remark: "No greater attention should be paid to these declarations than to work-a-day publishing advertisements." This is equivalent to admitting that Hemminge and Condell and the imaginary syndicate were all liars together.

Mr. Pollard comments upon Lee's "detailed and overstated assertions," and "would be glad to know his sources of information"—"as usual Lee offers a detailed and confident account of everything that was done." Mr. Pollard also ridicules the assertion as to the custom of destroying manuscripts.

Notwithstanding all his care to conceal his personality as the author of the plays, Bacon unconsciously reveals himself by certain tricks of speech, and especially by a

triform construction of sentences—such, for example, as :—

SHAKESPEARE : “Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them.”

BACON : “Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.”

In the “Device of Philautia” occurs the following prose passage :—“Use the advantage of your youth ; be not sullen to your fortune ; make your pleasure the distinction of your honour, the study of your favourites, the talk of your people, and the allurements of all foreign gallants to your Court. In a word, sweet Sovereign (*cf. Cymbeline* I. i. : ‘Sweet Sovereign, leave us to ourselves’), dismiss your counsellors, and only take counsel of your five senses.”

And again :—

“For in few words, what is your strength if you find it not ? Your fortune, if you try it not ? Your virtue, if you show it not ? ”

This, recollect, is from a play admittedly written by Bacon. Could anyone tell it from Shakespeare ? Is it not conclusive that when Bacon becomes dramatic he becomes Shakespearean ? I would refer readers to the whole of Mr. George Hookham’s article in the *National Review* of September, 1909. It is hard to believe that anyone of impartial mind and moderate intelligence, really desirous that truth should prevail, ruthless of consequences, could resist its conclusions, which effectually dispose of the desperate clutching at a straw of the drowning Stratfordians when they assert that Bacon’s prose style proves that he “could not” write plays and poems equal to anything in Shakespeare. Bacon wrote his “Antitheses” when he was very young. They were first published in 1605. We find there the following :—“The rising to honour is laborious,

the standing slippery, the fall headlong." These expressions are used in *Troilus and Cressida*, played at the Globe in 1600; and they appear in *Henry VIII*.

Measure for Measure not being known until the Folio of 1623, and being mentioned in Tobie Mathews' correspondence with Bacon (as previously alluded to) practically fixes Bacon with the authorship.

Measure for Measure is founded upon a play entitled *Promos and Cassandra*, published in 1578. It was never acted and might well have been forgotten. But the author was George Whetstone, who in 1579, wrote a biographical elegy in honour of Bacon's father, Sir Nicholas Bacon, and whose three brothers were at Grays Inn at the same time as Francis Bacon. It is fairly certain that Francis had a copy of the elegy, would know the author, and that his play would come naturally into his hands.

Hamlet contains many remarkable indications.

On the authority of George Russell French (in the "Shakspereana Geneologica," 1869, p. 301) when Robert Cecil was about to set out on his travels, his father, Burleigh, was careful to enjoin upon him ten precepts, and in some of these the identity of the language with that of Polonius is so close that Shakspeare could not have hit upon it unless he had been acquainted with Burleigh's parental advice. Such knowledge was obviously impossible for the Actor, but Bacon, as Robert Cecil's cousin, would naturally be quite likely to hear of it.

In the earlier *Hamlets* the Prince writes to Ophelia—

"Doubt thou the earth is fire :
Doubt that the sun doth move.

In the First Folio this appears as

"Doubt thou the *stars* are fire.

Why should Shakespeare's ghost make the change?

But it is just at this time that Bacon, while still cherishing his pre-Galilean heresy, found reason to surmise that the earth's interior was not, as he had held, in a state of fusion.

In *Hamlet* the names *Guildestern* and *Rosencrantz* are those of real personages. *Guildestern* was a chief actor in the melancholy history of Christian II. of Denmark, and therefore appropriately selected as a name by the author of *Hamlet*. *Rosencrantz* was the ambassador sent to James I. These two names are found in close juxtaposition (with the date 1577) in an album which probably belonged to a Duke of Wurtemberg.

The first printed edition was the quarto of 1603, and in that these names are *Gilderstone* and *Rossencraft*. The Cambridge editors remark that "The text of *Hamlet* given in the Folio of 1623 is not derived from any of the previously existing Quartos, but from an independent manuscript. Many passages are found in the Folio which do not appear in any of the Quartos. On the other hand, many passages found in the Quartos are not found in the Folio." It is circumstantially clear that the correction of the names, and all the foregoing alterations, omissions and additions—being made seven years after Shakespere's death—were made by a living author, who was Francis Bacon. He was probably the "grand possessor" referred to in relation to other plays as holding manuscripts. He held them because it is morally certain that he created them. The expression used by Heming and Condell in their sham address, "We have scarce received from him" a blot in his papers is somewhat comical, the man having been dead seven years.

In the play of *Henry VIII.* there is a practical identity of certain passages with those contained in a speech of Bacon's, written in 1604, but never published until long after the appearance of the play:—

THE SPEECH.

Wherein it may please your Majesty to vouchsafe me leave, first to set forth unto you the dutiful and respective carriage of our proceeding; next the substance of our petition.

For there is no grievance so sensible and so bitter unto the common subject, as this whereof we now speak. The commissions they bring down are against the law, and because they know so much they will not show them. For all their grievances are committed in your Majesty's name.

For instead of takers they become taxers. I do set apart these commodities, woolfels and leather.

THE PLAY.

Queen Katherine : Thank your Majesty.

That you would love yourself, and in that love Not unconsidered leave your honour, nor The dignity of your office, is the point Of my petition.

Queen K. : I am solicited, not by a few, And those of true condition, that your subjects Are in great grievance : there have been commissions Sent down among them which hath flaw'd the heart

Of all their loyalties :— wherein, although, My good Lord Cardinal, they vent reproaches Most bitterly on you, as putter-on Of these exactions.

Norfolk : It doth appear ; for upon these taxations, The clothiers all, not able to maintain The many to them 'longing, have put off The spinsters, carders, fellers, weavers.

The knowledge of medicine, the mere selection of certain obscure portions of the human anatomy, such as the *colon* and *pia mater*, which would be unknown to anyone who had not studied surgery, which are found in the plays, is an indication compatible only with Bacon's authorship. How should the Stratford actor have possessed such knowledge ?

In the *Promus* is the expression (entry 1,206) "good dawning." It had never previously been used in literature. It follows up "good morrow" in the *Promus*. "Good dawning to thee, friend" (*Lear* II. ii. 1) is the only instance of its use in Shakespeare.

But hundreds of this sort of instances might be quoted. *They are examples of the process by which Bacon was constructing the English language.*

Here again is a bunker for the Stratfordians. Can any rational person suppose that Shakspeare on arrival in London spoke with any other than his provincial accent? Is it likely that he ever got rid of it? Few people even nowadays fail to carry to their graves such marks of their origin. For the first few years he must have seemed a very unlikely person to have written *Venus and Adonis*! Burns, genius as he was, hardly attempted to write in any other than his native dialect. You find no similar indication in Shakespeare.

English was not taught in the schools. The first English grammar was not published until 1586. The language and pronunciation of an English county gentleman, even down to the reign of William III., were such as we should in these days have only from the most ignorant people. One hundred years earlier it is stated that the accents of the different shires were so marked that the militia were unable to comprehend their orders unless given by an officer from their own district.

In Sonnet 107 occurs the line—

“The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured.”

In Bacon's *Henry VII.* there is the expression—

“The Queen hath endured a strange eclipse.”

There is no other known example of this expression, “enduring an eclipse,” although great efforts have been made to discover one. The “mortal moon” is generally held to refer to Elizabeth.

The general effect of all successive revisions for the Folio of 1623 is that fresh facts are introduced and the text is kept in accordance with the march of events subsequent to the first appearance of the plays in quarto.

MUSIC.

The exact and extensive knowledge shown in the plays could only have been attained by study and instruction. Shakspeare certainly never had either. The 128th Sonnet justifies the inference that the author was a performer on the spinet.

PAINTING.

Professor Elze, a Stratfordian, whose contentions are constantly at variance with the evidence he himself produces, is unable to account for Shakespeare's technical knowledge of painting except on the hypothesis that he personally visited Italy.

And so on, it might be *ad infinitum*!

I have said that the dates of the letters which passed between Bacon and Matthew are usually erased, or have not been affixed, but one of Matthew's letters is dated 9th April, 1623. It is an answer to a letter from Bacon, which had been accompanied by a gift of something for which Matthew thanks him as follows:—

“I have received your great and noble token, and can but return the humblest of my thanks for your lordship's vouchsafing so to visit the poorest and unworthiest of your servants,” etc.

There was nothing published in Bacon's name in the spring of 1623. It is, therefore, extremely probable that as Bacon habitually sent his works to Matthew, the “noble token and gift” referred to was a copy of the First Folio just issued.

There are two letters which would settle this whole controversy indisputably if *we only had their dates*. One from Matthew to Bacon runs:—

“I will not promise to return you weight for weight, but *Measure for Measure*, and I must tell you beforehand that you are not to expect any other stuff from me than fustian and bombast and such wares as that. For there is no venturing in other commodities, and much less upon such as are forbidden. Neither, indeed, do we know what is forbidden and what is not,” etc.

The other from Bacon to Matthew :—

“Of this, when you were here, I showed you some model, at what time methought you were more willing to hear *Julius Cæsar* than *Queen Elizabeth* commended.”

The point is that *Julius Cæsar* had never been heard of until seven years after Shakspeare's death, and *Measure for Measure*, if acted (which is doubtful), had never been published.

If Bacon and Matthew show a knowledge of these plays before their first appearance in the Folio, the authorship of Shakspeare is impossible, and that these two letters were written before 1623 is certain.

About the years 1605 to 1609 Bacon writes to Matthew :—“My ‘Instauration’ I reserve for our conference ; it sleeps not. Those works of the ‘Alphabet’ are in my opinion of less use to you where you are now, than at Paris ; and therefore I conceived that you had sent me a kind of tacit countermand of your former request. But in regard that some friends of yours have still insisted here, I send them to you ; and for my part I value your own reading more than your publishing them to others.”

And again :—“I have sent you some copies of my book of the ‘Advancement,’ which you desired, and a little work of my recreation which you desired not.”

Thomas Chamberlayn writes to Sir Dudley Carleton that Tobie Matthew “perhaps presumes on the Lord Keeper's favour, which indeed is very great now, for he lodges him at York House and carries him next week along with him to his house at Gorhambury.”

We are told by a biographer of Matthew that he “affected the reputation of a man of universal genius, and certainly possessed many accomplishments.”

It should be noted that Matthew turned Roman Catholic—to Bacon's sorrow—and in consequence had to live in exile on the Continent for many years. He was the son of the Archbishop of York, and as he made

himself useful whilst abroad in promoting the Spanish match, he was invited to England, taken into favour by the King, and knighted.

In many other letters between Bacon and Matthew "writings" are alluded to, and in one, Bacon begs Matthew to be "*careful of the writings submitted to you that no one may see them.*"

It would not be fulfilling my undertaking to deal with all the arguments, *pro* and *con*, were I to omit reference to the use of certain Warwickshire names in the two plays—*Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Lord Penzance in his book, "The Bacon-Shakespeare Controversy," regards this as the strongest card in the Stratfordian pack. The explanation which Lord Penzance suggests as the most probable is that Shakspeare, in making the plays more suitable to the audiences, himself threw in the ribald talk and coarser language fitting them to the persons of whom he had some knowledge in the Stratford neighbourhood—such as Marion Hacket, the fat ale-wife of Wincot, Christopher Sly, etc. This is possible, and in view of the process described in the extract I give from Jonson's "Bartholomew Fair" hereafter, highly probable. But there is another curious point. By far the most important and striking of these allusions are contained in the INDUCTION to *The Taming of the Shrew* (a play by the way which is repeatedly mentioned in Henslowe's Diary, but in connection with other authors). *This induction has nothing whatever to do with the play*, the scene of which is in Padua. The play is supposed to be given for the amusement of Christopher Sly, a "drunken tinker," who has been found in a condition of comatose intoxication, and is having the practical joke played upon him that he is, on waking up in a lord's house, told that he is himself the lord. There is something suggestive about even this aspect of the matter in relation to Shakspeare's authorship, but it

is very plausibly surmised that the whole induction was written as a sarcasm upon the man Shakspeare.

As regards the mere names in the *Merry Wives*, Bacon was by marriage connected with Warwickshire and the Lucy family.

At the close of this chapter on the minute indications of authorship, it is perhaps appropriate to make a brief sketch of the social conditions, and more particularly the character of the reputed dramatic authors and audiences of the "Shakespearean" epoch. No one has made so profound a study of the subject as Mr. Harold Bayley, whose book, "The Shakespeare Symphony" (Chapman & Hall) is perhaps as sensational as any in the English language, not because it is written for the purpose of advocating a particular theory, but because it groups together facts and phenomena relating to the Elizabethan period—literary, social, political—which should be incredible but for the absolute evidence supporting them. We none of us realise what the conditions of life were during the reign of Elizabeth and James the First. The appalling horrors of the Government persecutions of the Catholic "recusants" are such as to stagger the mind. In 1582 executions were so frequent that complaint was made that London was "but as one shambles for human flesh." Everywhere on the gateways and bridges were the hideous trophies of human heads and limbs, boiled, tarred and weatherworn. The brutality and ignorance of the masses of the people were loathsome. "In the eyes of Europeans Englishmen were regarded as barbarians with whom it was impossible to associate as equals." Mr. Bayley has most carefully collated the evidences of the manners of the common people, and even their pronunciation of ordinary words, which would be mostly unintelligible to us now. The habitual conduct of the "groundlings" in the theatres was too filthy for modern publication.

The Lord Mayor in 1597 wrote to the Privy Council that the theatres were the haunts of "thieves, horse-stealers, cozeners, coney catchers, contrivers of treason, and other idle and dangerous persons."

In 1572 Harrison, in his *Chronology*, wrote: "Would to God these common plaiers were exiled for altogether as seminaries of impiety and their theatres pulled down," etc

The behaviour of the players was so abnormally vicious that (even in that not exactly squeamish age) in the interests of order and decency the City forbade the erection of playhouses within its precincts. That is why "The Globe" at Southwark, "The Curtain" at Shoreditch, and other theatres were outside the City boundaries. "For a woman to enter a theatre meant the loss of her character." (Of course, on the stage, only men were allowed to act women's parts.) "Actors were classed with mountebanks, zanies and buffoons." Under the Poor Law of 1572 they were, unless licensed, deemed to be "rogues, vagabonds and sturdye beggars." On first occasion they were "to bee grevouslye whipped and burnte through the gristle of the right eare with an hot yron of the compasse of an ynych about." A second offence was adjudged felony; a third entailed death.

In order to evade the law the actors—"foolish beasts" Nash terms them—sheltered themselves by enlisting as the servants of some great man. Aristocrat and actor did not exactly fraternise! Even the festive students of Gray's Inn protested against having had foisted upon them "a company of base and common fellows," *i.e.*, professional players, and this upon an occasion when it is practically certain that Shakspeare was one of the cast.

The known actual personal lives of most of the playwrights were in perfect accord with their surroundings. Greene, Marlowe, George Peele, Thomas Nash, Thomas Randolph, John Day, Middleton, Dekker, led lives of

the most disreputable character, but the overwhelming records of Greene, Marlowe and Peele, are too horrible to be given in detail. Pages 8 to 13 of Bayley's book, with its authorities, must be read to be believed.

And then, in the next chapter, "THE SWEETNESS AND GRAVITY OF THE DRAMATIC MIND," comes the utterly incomprehensible contrast of the refinement, nobility, and exquisite beauty of the ethical aspirations which permeated the whole of the dramatic writings of these very men ! These pure and beautiful plays, their language often only even comprehensible by persons of high education, are supposed to have been written for and performed to audiences of the character I have indicated ! *Were they really written by these men ?*

Schlegel says that, "in the works of Shakespeare we perceive an elevation of genius which may almost be said to exceed the powers of human nature." Yet we have the paradox that as dramatists "the lowliest persons in the land, apt for pilfering, perjury, forgery, or any villainy," were in few, if any respects, inferior to the most elevated intellects of their age !

This certainly goes to prove that the plays, as we have them, were composed more for the study than the stage.

Ben Jonson, in his *Bartholomew Fair*, has a scene which throws much light upon the relation of the audiences to the plays as actually performed before them.

Cokes ("an Esquire of Harrow"), interrogating Leatherhead ("an impresario"), enquires with regard to *Hero* and *Leander* :—

But do you play it according to the printed book ? I have read that.

Leatherhead.—By no means, sir.

Cokes.—No ! How then ?

Leatherhead.—A better way, sir. That is too learned and

poetical for our audiences. What do they know what Hellespont is, or *guilty of true love's blood*? Or what Abydos is? or the other *Sestos Light*?

Cokes.—Thou art in the right. I do not know myself.

Leatherhead.—No. I have entreated Master Littlewit to take a little pains to reduce it to a more familiar strain for our people.

Cokes.—How, I pray thee, good Master Littlewit?

Littlewit.—I have only made it a little easy and modern for the times, sir, that's all. As for the Hellespont, I imagine our Thames here: and then Leander, I make a dyer's son about Puddle Wharf, and Hero a wench o' the Bankside, who, going over one morning to Old Fish Street, Leander spies her land at Brig stairs and falls in love with her. Now do I introduce Cupid, having metamorphosed himself into a drawer, and he strikes Hero in love with a pint of sherry and other pretty passages."

That's how it was done.

The plays, as we have and admire them, were indeed "never clapper-clawed by the vulgar"!

To begin giving illustrations of the ethics of the plays would take one too far, but, at a time when frightful penalties attached to people who did not go to Church and take the Sacrament (see the case of Margaret Clitheroe, page 64, which it is difficult to read without losing one's mental balance), the mere expression, "*Thought is free*," was a deadly dangerous one. It had to be wrapped up somehow. We have seen it in these exact words in Bacon's *Promus*:—

Shakespeare—*Twelfth Night* I. iii., 1623, and *The Tempest* III. ii.

Heywood—*Edward IV.*, 1600.

Randolph—*Muses' Looking Glass* IV. iii., 1638.

Beaumont and Fletcher—*Honest Man's Fortune* II. v. 1613-47.

Marston—*Insatiate Countess* III. ii., 1613.

As bearing upon the reasons why Bacon did not acknowledge play-writing, not merely is the above a pertinent consideration, but it must be remembered

that if any spy of Cecil's, or contemptible informer, could speciously accuse a man of saying anything which could be twisted against him or was offensive to the Queen, that man stood thenceforth in danger of liberty or life.

Bacon's position later in life and influence with the Star Chamber would be a sufficiently prohibitive menace to anyone betraying a secret concerning him.

Nothing is more remarkable than the advocacy of mercy and its attribution to monarchs in the plays of this period, when there was no such thing and the whole civil polity was founded upon its opposite.

Tourneur, Massinger, Bacon, Shakespeare (in many plays), Dekker, Beaumont and Fletcher, May, Anonymous, Ford, Greene, all wrote more or less identical passages.

"The Shakespeare Symphony" is a mine of learning, a museum of curiosities; and, alas! chambers of horrors occupy a considerable portion of its space.

In the *Promus* we find this profound reflection: "the extreme of justice is the height of injustice," and Bacon in his "Essay of Judicature," says: "In cases of life and death Judges ought as far as the Law permitteth in Justice to remember Mercy."

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

BACON "fell" in 1621. From that date to his death he was engaged in hurrying to publication (with the assistance of Ben Jonson as mentioned) all his *acknowledged* writings. The "De Augmentis," "Natural History," "History of the Winds," "New Atlantis," "Sylva Sylvarum," "Apophthegms," "Third Edition of the Essays," and especially that on "Friendship," dedicated to Tobie Matthew, &c.

His Will gives directions relating to his MSS. and unfinished writings, and contains the following sentence:—"For my name and memory I leave it to men's charitable speeches and to foreign nations, and the next ages; and to mine own countrymen *after some time be past.*"

This was indeed prophetic, for it is foreign people who were the first and most eager to examine the merits of the claims I am herein endeavouring to substantiate, and to rehabilitate his name. It is foreign people who first displayed the intelligence and intellectual discernment, and freedom from prejudice necessary to look into the question "whether these things be so."

It is deplorable that the great barrier to truth making its way, and being glorified, is an unscrupulous literary conspiracy of Bacon's own countrymen, to which most of the important journals lend their aid and countenance, admitting attacks upon Baconians, but (with some honourable exceptions) suppressing the replies.

It is a conspiracy to dethrone reason and to exalt magic! Envenomed *amour propre* and literary vanity furnish its cohesive strength.

Always, too, the silly quibble will be started, "What

does it matter who wrote the literature so long as we possess it?" If there be a science of psychology it matters a great deal. If we are to govern our judgment and conduct by the light of reason and experience, it is supremely important. If effort and training in accurate mental processes be good and wholesome the investigation will bring its own reward, besides making our intellectual apparatus more capable of discerning truth in other directions.

Whatever the difficulties may be in proving the Baconian authorship of "Shakespeare," *they are inappreciable in comparison with those of attributing it to the Stratford actor.*

Otherwise we have to assume that the greatest literary genius of mankind, after attaining the deepest and widest culture and living for twenty years in the highest society of his country, gave all up, and retreated to a small provincial town, occupied himself for many years in pettifogging pecuniary transactions and retail trade—led, in fact, the life of a small tradesman—never wrote another line, and left not a book nor a scrap of correspondence either to or from him, nor a literary wrack of any kind behind him.

After what has gone before, the honesty and good sense of the most prominent Stratfordian professional defenders may be gauged by the remark already quoted, "There is an entire absence of anything which could give a colour to the belief that Bacon wrote Shakespeare." Anyone who would say that would say anything, and must have as little judgment as regard for truth. Not even a colourable case!

Just imagine a man of Shakespeare's known nature allowing play after play to appear without his name, when many of them—and for aught we know, all that had been acted—were successful, so that he had every-

thing to gain by acknowledging them. This anonymous publication is alone conclusive evidence that *he* did not write them, that the real author was, during the period of anonymity, poisoning himself, and considering what was best to be done.

Then there is the tradition of £1,000 having been paid to Shakespeare by Southampton to assist him in building the Globe Theatre. There is no accounting for this third-rate actor having become wealthy when no one else, either actor or playwright, possessed any solid resources upon which retirement from active work was possible, and nearly all his supposed author-colleagues were penniless, and some even starving.

Putting this and that together, it seems pretty certain that Southampton, who was Bacon's closest friend, did pay a sum of money to Shakspeare, which Bacon would provide, and that one of the stipulations was that Shakspeare should take himself off to Stratford—which he did in 1597—and lie low for awhile.

Shakspeare bought his house, "New Place," at that time, and would have had every reason to maintain strict secrecy and a modest demeanour, and to keep as much in the background as possible, as he was, to some extent, enjoying a reputation which would collapse like a pricked bubble upon inquiry. The continuance of his prosperity would depend upon his doing all that was desired by the author of that prosperity. It is, of course, just possible that Shakspeare blackmailed Bacon. There is the indisputable fact that *Richard II.* gave rise to a great danger to its author. Had the Queen known that Bacon had written it his career would have been irretrievably ruined. Recollect it came out *anonymously* in 1597. It is easy to understand that there was a strong motive for destroying the scent of inquiry. Shakspeare temporarily vanishes, and then the name

with the hyphen, Shake-speare, appears on the title-page in the following year, 1598, and is so spelled in all subsequent editions down to 1615. It next is included in the first Folio, and is not printed again until 1634, which edition is a Quarto.

The broad fact is that the name is not used on any play before 1597, and first on the most dangerous one, and with the hyphen.

Venus and Adonis is prefaced by the quotation from Ovid:—

*"Vilia miretur vulgus, mihi flavus Apollo
Pocula castalia plena ministret aqua."*

It is so probable that this would have been at the fingers' ends of the ex-butcher's apprentice! It was published anonymously in 1593, with the letter of dedication to Bacon's intimate friend, Southampton, signed "William Shakespeare." The same is the case with *Lucrece* in 1594, which remains anonymous until 1616 (Shakspeare died in *April* of that year), when it appeared as "newly revised." All this indicates that Bacon had his eye on a suitable "man of straw" quite as early as 1593, first as applicable to poems of a special character, Southampton being informed of the cognomen, and later for the plays. The object throughout was to secure for the author liberty to give free expressions to his opinions and instructional truths, to rid himself of all cramping conditions without jeopardising the career which was the only one open to him if he were to maintain his social and political position and means of livelihood.

That Shakspeare had come to be regarded as at least a purveyor of plays, or a channel through which they were obtained, long before 1592 is proved by Greene's allusion, already quoted, in the "Groatsworth of Wit" in that year. Bacon would therefore be well acquainted with the name, and probably the man, by 1593.

The attitude of everybody of whom we have the faintest record towards Shakspeare the actor proves that he was not regarded as the author, or even conceivably as an author. As the channel through which plays came to the theatre they may have been loosely spoken of as his. But the man being what he was, the impossibility of his having himself written them was so "open, gross, and palpable," that no one seriously entertained the idea.

On that hypothesis all difficulties disappear ; on any other they are insuperable, for *it is quite certain* that no one in daily contact with him regarded him as the author, and equally certain that there is no recorded word of his ever claiming to be so.

He does not figure in the social or literary world of his day. The end of the man's life fits in with the beginning. There is the same unamiable, intemperate, immoral life, the same carelessness and neglect of wife and children ; no sign of learned education or books or literature ; no more trace of the plays, in association with himself personally, at the end of his life than at the beginning. If he was ever addressed as "gentle " Shakspeare it was in the spirit of Jonson's line, "And now esquires are named," a sarcasm upon his heraldic aspirations.

Jonson says Bacon "could with difficulty let pass an occasion for a jest."

Bacon says in his "De Augmentis, "A jest is many times the vehicle of truth which could not otherwise have been brought in." In Shakspeare he had a good one, for of him he incarnated and immortalised a pun.

P.S.—Since the above was in print there has been correspondence in the *Pall Mall Gazette* wherein Mr. M. H. Spielman displays the characteristic rabid rocklessness of the professional Stratfordian by flatly denying the accuracy of Dugdale's engraving of the original Stratford monument. All the actor's supporters are prepared to deny or assert anything which suits their obsession, and if their statements traverse history—so much the worse for history!

APPENDIX A.

Plays attributed to Shakspeare, and published during his life-time :—

Lochrine, 1590.	Two Noble Kinsmen, 1600.
The Contention, 1594.	Edward III., 1600.
Rom. Jul., 1597.	Macedorus, 1600.
Rich. II., 1597.	Merry Devil of Edn., 1600.
Rich. III., 1597.	Merry Wives, 1602.
Love's Labours Lost, 1598.	Hamlet, 1603.
Love's Labours Won, 1598.	London Prodigal, 1605.
1st part Hen. IV., 1598.	George a Green, 1607.
Mid. N. Dream, 1600.	Puritan Widow, 1607.
Mer. of Venice, 1600.	Lear, 1608.
2nd part Hen. IV., 1600.	Arden of Faversham, 1608.
Hen. V., 1600.	Yorkshire Tragedy, 1608.
Titus And., 1600.	Arraignment of Paris, 1608.
Sir J. Oldcastle, 1600.	Pericles, 1609 (<i>omitted</i> in 1623).
Thos. Lord Cromwell, 1600.	Troil. Cressida, 1609.
Much Ado, 1600.	

Othello, 1622.

Plays unpublished until 1623 (seven years after Shakspeare's death). The last eight, at least, never seem to have been acted or heard of until 1623 * :—

Comedy of Errors.	The Tempest.
Two Gen. Verona.	* 1st part Henry VI
Taming of the Shrew.	* 2nd " "
King John.	* 3rd " "
As You Like It.	* All's Well.
Twelfth Night.	* Julius Cæsar.
Measure for Measure.	* Coriolanus.
Macbeth.	* Cymbeline.
Antony and Cleopatra.	* Timon of Athens.
Winter's Tale.	* Henry VIII.

Nearly the whole of these 52 Plays have been examined and found to contain *Promus* notes, and other marks of Baconian authorship. It is thought probable that not only "The Misfortunes of Arthur," but several other crude Plays and anonymous poems, will hereafter be included amongst the youthful works of Francis Bacon.

APPENDIX B.

LIST OF AUTHORITIES CONSULTED.

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 The Shakespeare Symphony. Harold Bayley. Chapman and Hall.
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- Baconiana. Numerous issues by the Bacon Society. Articles by Miss Alicia Leith and others.
- Articles, Speeches and Letters in the Press. W. T. Smedley, President of the Bacon Society.

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